

Linking Trade and Gender towards Sustainable Development

An Analytical and Policy Framework



**United
Nations**

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INTRODUCTION

SETTING THE STAGE

Globalization has led to increased cross-border flows of goods and services (i.e. international trade or simply trade in general), capital, labour, technology and information. Trade liberalization has been at the core of globalization. The prevailing assumption behind globalization is that the removal of trade and other economic barriers would help countries specialize, expanding production and employment opportunities for people in all trading partners – the proverbial wave that lifts all boats. Trade policies were often designed on the assumption that market forces would automatically ensure the realization of these outcomes despite trade theory explicitly identifying the need for complementary redistributive policies.

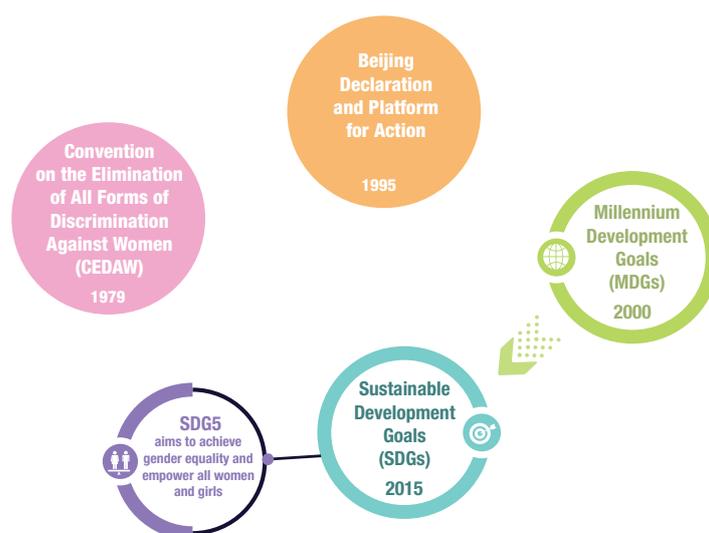
A key feature of economic development in the era of globalization is a disconnect between economic growth and social development: income inequality, social inequality and exclusion have increased even in countries that have recorded high levels of economic growth and had a remarkable trade performance. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequalities further within and across countries. It has become clear that economic policies affect different segments of the population, including men and women, in different

ways, challenging the assumption that economic policies, including trade policy, are “gender-neutral.”¹

With the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a follow-up in 2015, the discourse in international development has shifted first to the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* and then to the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* as an overarching framework for development. Global *gender equality* goals have been a critical component of the sustainable development agenda. MDG3, that specifically focused on gender equality, was subject to some criticism for its narrow (mainly social) interpretation of gender equality and *women’s empowerment*, and for its limited attention to the impact of economic factors on women’s well-being. SDG5, that succeeded MDG3, has a broader approach to gender equality. There are also universal legal frameworks toward gender equality, as summarized in figure 1.

Any change of trade policies or other economic policies is likely to have gender-specific repercussions. Specifically, international trade affects men and women in their different economic roles differently depending on their income, wealth, race, ethnicity, caste, spatial location, age, etc. This creates multiple and intersecting patterns of inequality, compounding the effect.

Figure 1. International instruments and goals related to gender equality that have been established over time



Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

¹ In this document, all concepts that are listed in italic the first time they appear in the text are defined in the Glossary.

This teaching volume will focus on the gender and trade dimension. Looking at countries' socio-economic structure through a gender lens is the general framework applied and described next.

While SDG 5 on gender equality and *women's economic empowerment* is central to the analysis of gender and trade, other SDGs are also relevant, including SDG 1 on ending poverty, SDG 2 on ending hunger, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, and SDG 17 on partnerships to attain the goals.

THE ECONOMY AS A GENDERED STRUCTURE

Before delving into the trade and gender nexus, it is important to clarify the ways in which “gender” and the “economy as a gendered structure” are conceived in this teaching volume. Gender is a system of norms and practices that ascribe certain roles, characteristics and behaviours to males and females based on their sex, and that generally assign those born female a subordinate status in society. Gender differences are socially constructed and learned through socialization processes rather than based on any “natural” distinction. These differences shape social, economic and political power relations between persons of different genders within the household, the market and society at large. They are context/time-specific and changeable.² In this context, gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration.³ Hence it is not a women's issue, but rather should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and an *indicator* of, sustainable people-centred development.⁴

It is also important to clarify the difference between gender equality and women's empowerment, as the two concepts are closely related but quite distinct. Gender equality concerns women's status relative to men's status with respect to the enjoyment of equal

rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Women's empowerment refers to whether women have a sense of self-worth, can exercise control over their own lives, and have options and choices for practical and strategic decisions. Women can be empowered, for instance, by being enabled to make their own decisions regarding the use of their resources and income (economic empowerment), access good-quality education and be independent in society and the family (social empowerment), participate in political life (political empowerment), and believe that they can improve their social and economic conditions (psychological empowerment). Women are empowered when they can take control and ownership of their lives and make choices through all these different forms (Bahri, 2021a).

By understanding the economy as a “gendered structure,” one explicitly acknowledges and identifies the gendered power relations that underpin the various institutions, transactions and relations that make up the economy (Elson, 1999). That is, the economy is viewed as part of a system of social relations in which gender is already inscribed, though gender relations within that system can also be transformed and made anew. For example, gender-based discrimination in labour markets is rife, and it means that women can access only a limited range of *occupations* and that wages paid to them underestimate their contribution. This is not only a breach of basic labour rights, it also makes it harder for a country to take advantage of the full productive capacity of its current and future workforce. Similarly, when women gain access to employment and income, it may lead to greater power and say in the household, and therefore mitigate some of the gender inequalities.

The first dimension in looking at the economy through a gender lens is to make visible the unpaid care and domestic work that play an important role in the continued functioning of the economy. This is because goods and services are produced by a labour force that is reproduced through many hours of unpaid labour spent cooking and cleaning, collecting water and fuel, and taking care of children, the elderly, and sick as well as able-bodied adults. This unpaid labour is vital for the functioning of the paid economy, yet it

² UN Women, “Concepts and definitions,” available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm> (accessed 10 November 2021).

³ Genders include men, women and people who do not identify themselves as either men or women, or who identify themselves with a gender different from the one assigned to them at birth. However, this document will refer to men and women for simplification purposes. Gender is different from one's gender identity.

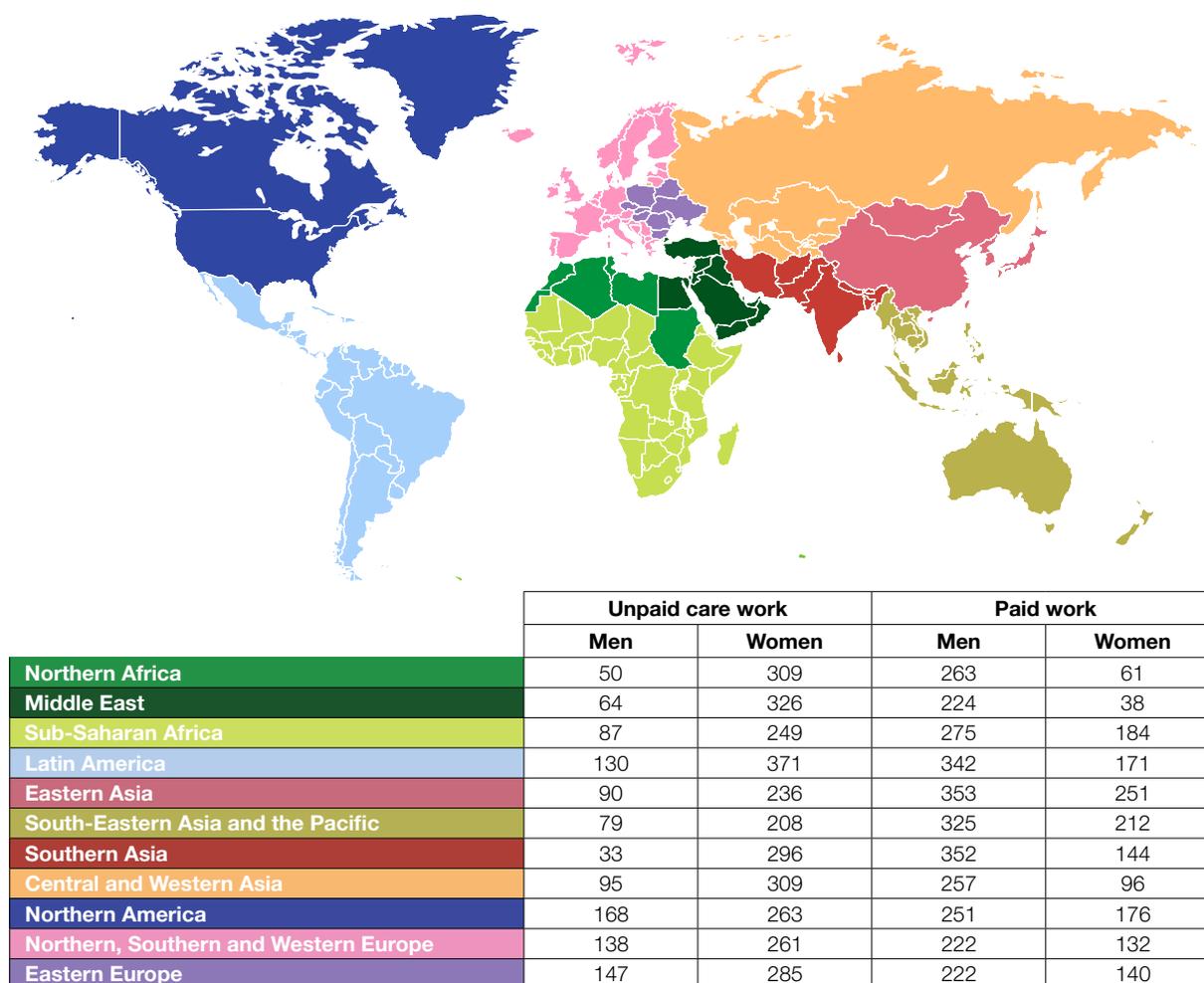
⁴ UN Women, “Concepts and definitions,” available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm> (accessed 10 November 2021).

remains invisible. The boundaries of the economic system therefore need to be broadened to include both market and non-market spheres. Understanding the interdependence between market activities (i.e. *productive activities* or paid work) and *non-market activities* (i.e. *reproductive activities* or unpaid work) as well as the *gender division of labour* within each sphere constitutes the starting point for any gender-aware economic analysis.

Globally, women provide over 75 per cent of the total hours of unpaid care work, and on average, dedicate 3.2 times more time than men to unpaid care work.⁵ While some countries have made progress, no country

has yet achieved gender equality in the sharing of unpaid care work. This puts women into constant time poverty, which constrains their ability to participate in the labour market (Charmes, 2019). Time poverty also holds back the potential for women to participate in trade. Across world regions, gender inequality in unpaid work time seems to be highest in Southern Asia, Northern Africa, and the Middle East (figure 2). In regions such as North America and Europe, women spend almost twice the time as men on unpaid care work. In contrast, women consistently spend less time than men in paid work across the world. The *gender gap* in paid work is highest in the Middle East and North Africa, reflecting the very low female labour force participation rates there.

Figure 2. Time spent on unpaid work and paid work across world regions (minutes per day)



Source: UNCTAD secretariat illustration based on data from Charmes (2019).

Note: Unpaid care work is defined as providing unpaid domestic services for one's own final use within households, providing unpaid caregiving services to household members, and providing community services and help to other households.

⁵ This figure is based on an analysis of *time use surveys* from 75 countries (33 developed countries, 36 emerging countries and six developing countries) by Charmes (2019).

Women (much more than men) have the double burden of participating in both paid and unpaid work. This dual role often has the effect of undermining women's position and negotiating power in the labour market, and jeopardizes their access to education and skill development opportunities, credit and other productive resources. It can also make women seek jobs that offer flexible arrangements but pay less, as in *informal employment* and part-time employment, so that they can more easily combine paid work with unpaid work responsibilities. Both forces increase women's dependence on male household members' income and increase their vulnerability.

This situation worsens in times of economic downturns such as that caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Women's concentration in non-regular jobs makes them more prone to dismissals. Women usually hold a larger share of informal employment and thus cannot access economic rescue packages. Small and medium-sized enterprises, where women dominate, may struggle to survive, and women entrepreneurs may need more time to reactivate their businesses. Women also face an increase in household responsibilities and domestic violence (Bahri, 2020). Women's increased care responsibilities during the pandemic have also

pushed them out of the labour market (Zarrilli and Luomaranta, 2021).

The second dimension in looking at the economy through a gender lens is to identify and analyse how *gender bias* in various forms of gender inequality affects women in the multiple roles they play in the economy. Before looking at that, it is important to first briefly explain how gender equality is framed in the context of this teaching volume. A distinction is made between three domains of economic and social life, and gender inequalities are examined within each domain (figure 3). The capabilities domain is mainly about education and health outcomes. The access to resources and opportunities domain refers to one's ability to access economic assets and resources (e.g. land and other property, infrastructure, credit, inputs, extension services), and to exercise decision-making power (e.g. holding managerial and leadership positions). The security domain is related to one's exposure to violence and conflict that cause physical and psychological harm, and that undermine the ability of individuals and communities to fulfil their potential.

The sections that follow present the three modules of the Teaching Volume, followed by an annex and glossary, as outlined graphically in figure 4.

Figure 3. Three domains of gender inequalities



Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

Figure 4. Overview of the modules, annex and glossary in the teaching volume



Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

1. MODULE 1 – THE GENDER IMPACT OF TRADE

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Trade leads to a better international allocation of resources and more efficient production patterns, with implications for employment and for levels and distribution of income. International trade agreements increasingly include provisions that go beyond trade rules and intersect with other domestic policy areas. Each of these aspects has a gender dimension, which depends on women's role in the economy.

Women typically participate in the economy as workers, entrepreneurs (e.g. farmers, business owners, traders), and consumers. They play several roles in parallel and are therefore exposed to different forms of gender inequality that may reinforce each other. Women also contribute to the reproduction of the labour force through their unpaid work, as was highlighted in the introduction to this volume. Table 1 presents an overview of these economic roles and the corresponding gender biases that affect women in each economic role.

Module 1 examines how trade openness affects women's economic empowerment and gender equality in women's different economic roles as workers, entrepreneurs and consumers. It distinguishes between broad economic sectors (i.e. agriculture, industry and services) to better assess the gender impact of trade for each economic role. The analysis draws from country and regional case studies to illustrate some of these effects, with a focus on developing countries.

After having completed Module 1, you will be able to:

- Illustrate the transmission channels through which trade affects women as workers, entrepreneurs and consumers
 - Discuss the differences in the gender impact of trade across different economic roles and economic sectors
 - Examine selected case studies on each transmission channel, and possibly apply some to the context of your own country or region of interest
 - Identify areas where more research is needed about the gender impact of trade.
-

Table 1. Gender bias in different economic roles

Women's economic role	Gender bias
Workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage or salary workers (employees) • Own-account workers • Contributing family workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration in a few sectors (<i>horizontal segregation</i>) and in lower-ranking occupations (<i>vertical segregation</i>) • Concentration in precarious forms of work (e.g. informal, part-time, seasonal, casual or temporary work) • <i>Weak bargaining power</i> in the labour market • Gender wage gap • Unequal access to education, training and skill development • Unequal sharing of unpaid domestic work and care responsibilities • Gender-based violence and harassment • Women's dominance among contributing family workers, which implies no personal remuneration except for sharing of household income • Women's dominance among own-account workers, their unequal access to productive resources, and their irregular flow of income
Entrepreneurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers • Self-employed • Business owners or employers (mostly micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, and rarely large enterprises) • Traders (e.g. street traders and vendors, cross-border traders, e-traders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal access to and control over economic assets and resources (e.g. capital, credit, land, inputs) • Unequal access to market information, producer networks and business development services • Unequal access to technical knowledge (e.g. extension services in agriculture) and technology • Unequal access to different modes of safe transportation • Lower literacy and numeracy skills • Limited awareness of trade rules and customs procedures • Unequal sharing of unpaid domestic work and care responsibilities • Gender-based violence and harassment
Consumers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasers of food and other goods • Users of public services (as main caregivers in the household) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal exposure to tariffs that tend to be high on foodstuffs as main purchasers of them for the household • Unequal sharing of domestic work and higher vulnerability to cuts in public expenditure that may follow tariff revenue loss

Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

1.1.1. TRANSMISSION CHANNELS

As an economy opens up to trade, domestic relative prices change. This leads to gains expected from trade expansion and to losses for some groups due to the resulting income redistribution. The identities of those who will gain and lose from trade depend on the nature of social stratification in society (e.g. class, occupation, skills, education, gender, region) and the economic sector(s) in which each such social group participates

(Rodrik, 2021). Figure 5 provides a visual overview of the gender impact of trade. Trade openness affects men and women wage workers differently in terms of employment, wage and unpaid work outcomes. Trade openness also has gendered effects on consumers, as men and women have different patterns of consumption. Finally, trade openness results in different income earning opportunities for men and women entrepreneurs in the economy, and has implications for the distribution of unpaid work between men and women.

Figure 5. The impact of trade on gendered economic outcomes



Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

Table 2 presents a review of key transmission channels through which openness to trade affects gendered economic outcomes in different economic roles (workers, entrepreneurs and consumers). The table

also presents the perspectives of different trade and economic theories, in the chronological order in which they appeared in the economics literature, in order to provide a full picture.

Table 2. Transmission channels from trade to women's economic empowerment and gender equality		
Women's economic role	General effect	Gender implication
Worker	<p><i>Standard trade theory:</i></p> <p>Trade is based on comparative advantage; that is, a country more intensively exports goods that use its relatively abundant factor – hence a relatively cheaper factor of production – and imports goods that are intensive in its scarce factor.</p> <p>Since developing countries are typically abundant in labour rather than capital (or low-skilled labour rather than high-skilled labour), trade liberalization is expected to lead to an expansion of labour-intensive (low-skilled) sectors.</p> <p>This in turn increases the relative demand for labour (i.e. employment) and returns to labour (i.e. wages) (for low-skilled workers) in these countries.</p>	<p><i>Standard trade theory:</i></p> <p>If women form a bulk of the low-skilled labour force in developing countries, standard trade theory implies that trade liberalization increases the demand for women's labour relative to men's. As a result, women's employment and income rise more relative to men's, leading to a lower gender gap in the labour market. This would benefit women both as workers and as entrepreneurs in expanding export sectors. This interpretation of standard trade theory implies that trade liberalization contributes to reducing gender inequality in developing countries. The gender implications of standard trade theory depend entirely on differences in skill level. They do not consider differences in terms of skill level among developing countries and the fact that women are well educated in some developing regions (for example according to 2020 UNESCO data, the Latin America and the Caribbean region enjoys gender parity in enrolment up to lower secondary education and women have higher upper secondary completion rates than men.*</p>
	<p><i>Becker's theory of discrimination:</i></p> <p>Becker's (1957) theory of labour market discrimination predicts the decline of discrimination through market competition. Accordingly, increased international competition reduces the scope for employers to discriminate, and makes firms abandon past discriminatory hiring practices.</p>	<p><i>Becker's theory of discrimination:</i></p> <p>As import competition increases in concentrated industries (i.e. those industries in which a few large firms take up a large percentage of the market), firms that previously discriminated against women would no longer continue paying higher wages to equally productive male workers. This would, in turn, reduce the gender wage differential in these previously uncompetitive sectors. In this framework, the gender wage gap is endogenous in that it adjusts to eliminate employment discrimination against women through the firm competition mechanism.</p>

* <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374614?posInSet=2&queryId=N-EXPLORE-c4b172dc-98c6-4a19-833a-c05be6d31663>

Women's economic role	General effect	Gender implication
	<p><i>Trade expansion based on absolute advantage:</i></p> <p>Trade is based on absolute advantage (i.e. absolute unit costs); that is, a country that produces a good more cheaply will dominate the international market and outdo its competitors.</p> <p>The absolute differences in costs of production are an outcome of technology and educational, wage and demand gaps across countries. If countries do not introduce policies to reduce their technology and educational gaps, low wages become the main competitive strategy of firms in international markets.</p> <p><i>New and new-new trade theories:</i></p> <p>New trade theory provides an alternative framework to explain trade taking place between economies with similar factor endowments (e.g. intra-industry trade among developed countries) by incorporating economies of scale, product differentiation and imperfect competition into the trade model. Accordingly, each country specializes in the sector in which it has the largest domestic market so that it can realize economies of scale.</p> <p>New-new trade theories posit that costs associated with trade induce only the most productive and high-technology firms to export, increasing the relative demand for skilled and committed workers.</p> <p><i>Technological change and automation:</i></p> <p>Trade liberalization induces technological change, which complements labour and makes manufacturing jobs less physically demanding.</p> <p>At the same time, trade may accelerate automation. Routine or repetitive tasks are more likely to be automated than those tasks that require complex cognitive skills and judgement.</p>	<p><i>Trade expansion based on absolute advantage:</i></p> <p>The gender wage gap and women's low bargaining power may serve as a way to lower unit costs of production for exporting firms. A cost-cutting strategy based on low-wage labour may increase women's relative employment but not necessarily their relative wages. The gender wage gap may become a source of export growth and could be consistent with increased international competition, so the gap is considered exogenous, and export growth (or economic growth) as endogenous in this setting.</p> <p><i>New and new-new trade theories:</i></p> <p>The gender implications of new and new-new trade theories depend on the skill distribution of men and women in the labour force. Trade expansion would widen the gender wage gap in export sectors to the extent that women are less present among skilled labour. In some settings, since firms cannot observe job commitments, they practice statistical discrimination against women. This is because women are perceived by employers to be less committed and flexible than men. This channel also reduces the relative demand for women workers growing the gender gap in the labour market.</p> <p><i>Technological change and automation:</i></p> <p>Technological change that complements labour reduces the need for physical strength and increases women's relative productivity in production tasks. This increases women's relative wages and reduces the gender wage gap. Women tend to be over-represented in routine and repetitive tasks and therefore are likely to face job displacements and reduced work hours due to automation to a greater extent than men.</p>

Women's economic role	General effect		Gender implication
<p>Entrepreneurs (e.g. farmers, traders, business owners)</p>	<p>Trade liberalization leads to an expansion of sectors producing export goods, increases the relative price of export goods, and opens new markets for such goods. This would benefit entrepreneurs in export sectors.</p> <p>Elimination of import tariffs lowers the prices of imports and increases competition in the domestic market. This has an adverse effect on entrepreneurs in import-competing sectors as they find it hard to compete with cheaper imports.</p>	Income	<p>Trade liberalization increases the relative income of entrepreneurs in export sectors. Women entrepreneurs would also benefit from it to the extent that they have the capacity to export.</p> <p>Small entrepreneurs, many of whom are women, may incur a loss in income as a result of increased competition from cheaper imported products (unless they produce for their own consumption).</p> <p><i>Gender discrimination</i> may keep women entrepreneurs locked in low-productivity firms, which tend to suffer more from international competition.</p>
<p>Consumers</p>	<p>The main channel is through imports of goods, which lower prices and increase the variety of goods in import-competing sectors.</p> <p>The second channel is through the export of goods, which can lead to an increase in the price of these goods as a greater proportion of output is shipped overseas.</p> <p>Following trade liberalization policy, governments lose tariff revenue, which may lead to cuts in government spending unless the revenue loss is offset by a rise in other forms of taxes.</p>	Welfare	<p>Women benefit from these changes to the extent that, as the main purchasers of household necessities, they are the primary consumers of these imported products for which prices fall and variety increases.</p> <p>This would adversely affect women to the extent that, as the main purchasers of household necessities, they are the primary consumers of export products for which prices increase in the domestic market.</p> <p>Women would be negatively affected by a cut in government spending on public services. This is because women bear the burden of unpaid work (e.g. childcare, elderly care) in the absence of public services to this end.</p>

Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

Questions for discussion

- What are the channels through which trade affects women’s wellbeing and gender equality in the society?
- In what ways do the effects of trade openness on women’s employment and income across different economic roles differ in the economy? Can a woman simultaneously face positive and negative effects from the same trade policy change?

1.2. WOMEN WORKERS

The adoption of *export-oriented policies* by developing countries from the 1960s and 1970s onward saw a massive entry of women workers into labour-intensive manufacturing production (mostly textile and apparel but also some light manufacturing). Women constituted up to 70 to 90 per cent of workers in these sectors and entered formal employment for the first time in most cases (e.g. Mexico, Puerto Rico, Republic of Korea, Singapore). The expansion of *non-traditional agricultural exports (NTAEs)* and, later, export-oriented services (e.g. tourism, *business process outsourcing - BPO*) further facilitated this process of women’s increased share in wage employment, known as the *feminization of labour*. This section first looks at the gendered employment effects of trade liberalization, including the level, patterns and quality of employment, and then examines the gendered wage effects.^{6,7}

1.2.1. EMPLOYMENT EFFECTS

Trade liberalization brings about changes in a country’s structure of production, with some sectors expanding (e.g. export-oriented production) and others contracting (e.g. import-competing production). The employment effect of trade is highly context-specific and depends on several factors, including (i) the economic sector of a worker (e.g. agriculture, industry, services); (ii) the employment status of a worker (e.g. wage worker, own-account worker, contributing family worker); (iii) changes in the export and import composition of a

sector (e.g. by product groups and trading partners); and (iv) trade-induced technological change.

Women and men tend to work in different sectors and occupations, resulting in *gender segregation* in employment, which is the outcome of both demand- and supply-side factors in the labour market, as illustrated in Table 3. Trade-induced technological change is an additional factor affecting the degree of substitutability of men and women workers across different economic sectors (Pieters, 2018).

Table 3. Demand- and supply-side factors behind gender segregation in employment

Demand-side factors: Firms consider...	Supply-side factors: Women seek jobs in a narrow range of occupations due to...
Women as best suited for certain labour-intensive activities due to their perceived gender-specific characteristics (e.g. dexterity, docility, submissiveness and reluctance to join unions)	Experiencing discrimination outside the labour market (e.g. pre-market discrimination in education and training)
Men as best suited for all other “heavy” and higher paying activities (e.g. due to their traditional breadwinner status)	Barriers to entry because of unions or government policies shaped by men
Hiring women in jobs dominated by men as having a negative effect on productivity	Women’s shouldering of unpaid care and domestic work responsibilities under the traditional gender division of labour
Gender segregation among occupations as a divide-and-conquer strategy to weaken workers’ bargaining power	The pressure of social norms on women

Sources: Elson et al. (2007) and Seguino and Braunstein (2018).

⁶ Most of the empirical research on the gender impact of trade focuses on women in wage employment due to greater availability of *sex-disaggregated data* on this type of employment. These studies mostly examine how changes in trade flows (i.e. exports and imports) or trade policy (e.g. tariff rates) affect labour market outcomes (e.g. employment, wages, working conditions) for men and women.

⁷ The focus here is on agriculture, manufacturing and services and does not cover mining or extractives sectors because this issue only applies to those sectors in a few developing countries.

This gender segregation in employment, especially across sub-sectors, forms the basis for the gendered labour market effects of trade liberalization. Consider a case in which all sub-sectors of manufacturing have identical female shares of employment. Sectoral reallocation in production and employment would not have any effect on the female share of employment in manufacturing, as all sub-sectors have the same shares. In contrast, when men and women are not evenly distributed across sectors, trade liberalization has gendered labour market effects. Employers may also prefer women workers over men workers in certain settings to take advantage of the gender wage gap as a cost-cutting measure, as will be discussed further in Module 2. These factors in turn influence how trade openness affects women and men differently in the labour market.

Besides looking at the impact of trade on employment levels, it is also important to examine its impact on job quality (e.g. wage levels, employment benefits, degree of vulnerability, informality) and, from a gender perspective, on gender segregation in employment. For example, evidence based on data for 69 countries between 1980 and 2011 shows that the number of developing countries where sectoral and *occupational segregation* is increasing is higher than the number of developing countries where it is decreasing. Trade openness is found to increase occupational segregation while having little impact on sectoral segregation (Borrowman and Klasen, 2020).

The sections that follow illustrate some of these gendered employment effects based on case studies selected from each broad economic sector.

The case of agriculture

Women are involved in the trade of agricultural goods in multiple ways: as contributing family workers, as wage workers, as own-account farmers, and as entrepreneurs running on- and off-farm businesses. Here the focus is on their roles as workers, leaving the assessment on women entrepreneurs in agriculture for the next section. However, it should be kept in mind that different economic roles often blend, and it is therefore not always possible to draw a clear line between women's role as workers and entrepreneurs in agriculture (UNCTAD, 2020a). This is mainly because

rural households in developing countries typically pursue multiple livelihood strategies to diversify their income sources. Besides their traditional role in farming, women work actively in small-scale fisheries, livestock raising, and forestry and agroforestry value chains (FAO, 2011).

Among developing regions, agriculture plays a major role in women's employment especially in South Asia (57 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (53 per cent).⁸ The share of women employed in agriculture has increased over time – known as the “feminization of agriculture” – in many developing countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, and Latin America. Male outmigration and expansion of commercial agriculture such as NTAEs are the key drivers behind women's growing role in agriculture (World Bank, 2016). On the one hand, men leaving agriculture implies an additional work burden and financial difficulties for the women left behind. On the other, it contributes to women's empowerment, as seen in the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam (FAO et al., 2010) and Nepal (Kar et al., 2018). This is mainly because women take on greater management and decision-making responsibilities on the farm in the absence of their husbands.

Women are often engaged as contributing family workers in the production of *cash crops*, reducing the cost of production. However, they usually do not have equal access to or control over farm resources, and the benefits that may accrue to them are uncertain (Berik and van der Meulen Rodgers, 2017). Women in agriculture-based economies benefit from incorporation into international trade more through wage employment opportunities on estate farms or packaging houses than directly through product markets. This has been accelerated by a shift from export cash crops (e.g. cocoa, coffee, and sugar) to NTAEs (e.g. fruit, vegetables, and flowers) that are more labour-intensive to produce and process, increasing demand for agricultural labour in many developing countries (Swinnen, 2015; World Bank, 2016; UNCTAD, 2016).

Women are preferred to men as wage workers, especially in packing houses, due to their perceived superiority in processing and handling fragile produce. NTAEs have therefore become an important source of

⁸ Based on the World Bank World Development Indicators database, available at <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators> (accessed on 9 March 2022).

employment for rural women to engage in paid work outside the family farm and earn a regular source of income in many developing countries. Examples include Latin American countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru, and some African countries including Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, South

Africa, Ethiopia and Senegal (Barrientos et al., 2019; Van den Broeck and Maertens, 2017). As a source of regular employment and higher incomes compared to traditional agriculture, such employment positively contributes to women's economic empowerment, as in the case of Peru (box 1).

Box 1. Women wage workers in non-traditional agricultural exports: The case of Peru

Peru is a major exporter of fresh fruits and vegetables in Latin America, with fresh grapes and asparagus among its main export products. Women workers constitute a major source of employment in non-traditional agricultural exports (NTAEs) in Peru. Women workers were mainly driven from subsistence agriculture sector, where they often supplied unpaid labour on family farms. Women therefore saw an increase in their income as a result of this shift to NTAEs in employment.

Women are mostly employed in packing operations, as they are preferred to men for handling delicate fruit and avoiding unnecessary losses. They are mostly employed formally but on a temporary basis in the agro-export sector, and hence earn at or above the legal minimum wage. In-kind benefits, such as transport, food, and in some cases, housing and child day care, are provided in most cases. Agro-export companies also provide these workers with training and skill development opportunities to meet the standards required by export markets.

Source: Gereffi et al. (2016).

At the same time, gender segregation in employment is prevalent in NTAEs, resulting in the crowding of women into low-skilled positions and hence not fully supporting their empowerment (World Bank, 2016a). For example, women are concentrated more in harvesting, slicing, grading and packaging, while men are more involved in operating machinery, truck driving or loading, and therefore receive better pay than women on average (Chan, 2013; Musiime, 2018). Men also dominate supervisory roles in NTAEs (ILO, 2016a). Overall, women are more likely to be in part-time, seasonal and low-paid jobs in agri-food value chains, and their seasonal or daily wage labour on farms has proven critical to keeping production costs low and export demand high (Berik and van der Meulen Rodgers, 2017).

There have been several multi-stakeholder initiatives to improve the quality of export-related jobs in response to consumer pressure, such as the United Kingdom Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). These involve the adoption of voluntary codes of conduct by firms in the North that source from suppliers in the South (Barrientos and Smith, 2005). Box 2 presents one such initiative for the flower sector in Kenya. However, voluntary initiatives cannot replace the legal enforcement of core labour rights and standards within countries. In many cases, developing countries have the requisite laws to protect labour rights, but their implementation and monitoring need to be significantly improved.

Box 2. Improving conditions for women workers in Kenya's flower sector

The Kenyan flower sector provides a good example of advancing gender equality in an export-oriented sector in which 75 per cent of workers are female. In the early 2000s, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and human rights, civil society and trade union organizations in Kenya and Europe campaigned to bring attention to the poor working conditions in the flower global value chain. These conditions included dominance of temporary contracts, violation of health and safety rules in greenhouses, and sexual harassment by supervisors. Additionally, there were often demands for unplanned overtime work to fill last-minute orders. This caused problems for childcare, and women were subject to additional risks of sexual harassment because of the long hours and night-time journeys to and from work.

A complaint was made to the United Kingdom Ethical Trading Initiative (UKETI) by an NGO member about supermarket sourcing. This led to investigations by ETI staff, and involved visits to Kenya by the supermarkets and NGO representatives, resulting in several changes in the leading flower farms:

- Implementation of sound gender policies on workers' rights, training, promotion and grievance procedures
- Participatory social auditing to identify issues facing women workers
- Converting women workers from temporary to permanent workers, enhancing their job security and rights
- An increase in women workers' trade union membership and inclusion under collective bargaining agreements
- Setting up gender committees on farms, providing a channel for women workers to voice grievances
- Longer lead times for delivery provided by some supermarkets.

Besides these steps taken, improvements in Kenya's employment law in 2007 further helped enhance national labour standards. Over time, more women became supervisors and moved into managerial positions, and there was a significant reduction in reported labour abuse and sexual harassment. Procedures are now in place for reporting and remedy if problems do occur.

The business benefits of the changes soon became clear. Enhancing the rights of a largely female workforce led to lower labour turnover, more committed skilled workers, higher productivity, and higher product quality. Despite this progress, however, there is still a long way to go: workers continue fighting for the right to a living wage and are working with trade unions and civil society organizations to further realize their rights.

Source: Barrientos et al. (2017).

Technological change, even in its simple form, can also play a role in better integration into agricultural *global value chains* (GVCs) and can support women's empowerment as workers. Consider the example of a medium-sized fruit and vegetable processing company in Burkina Faso where women constitute 85 per cent of the workers. The company faced challenges in meeting sanitary and phytosanitary standards and organic certification standards for supplying the European market. A major issue was the use of wooden tables to process mangoes, as the wood is prone to pest and soil contamination. Another key issue was access to efficient technology for drying mangoes. With the support of an Aid for Trade project, the company was able to acquire steel tables for processing and new drying tunnels, as well

as provide training on production practices, hygiene, safety and use of the new equipment. The result has been an increase in opportunities for training and better employment for workers, many of whom are women. It also resulted in increased employment opportunities for the community, as exports of the company have expanded (Redden, 2017; UNECE, 2019).

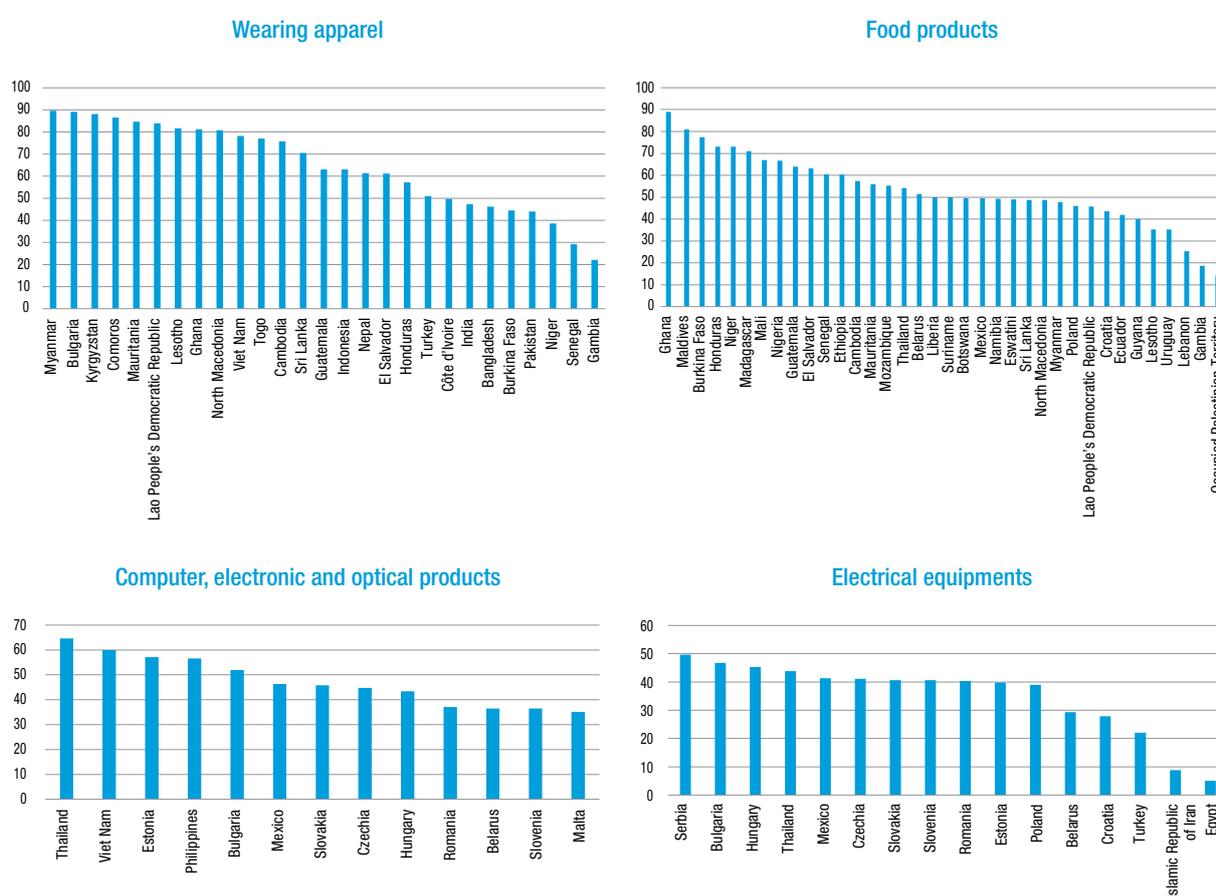
The case of manufacturing

The feminization of labour in agriculture-based or mineral-resource-rich economies has been surpassed by the central role of manufacturing in the feminization of labour through export orientation in semi-industrialized economies. In the early stages of trade liberalization in the 1960s and 1970s, employment gains for women

in the manufacturing sector were particularly strong in Asia, especially in the four East Asian “Tigers” (i.e. Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan Province of China, Singapore and the Republic of Korea). These gains later became significant in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in South Asia, and in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines in South-East Asia. Expansion in women’s manufacturing employment was also seen, though more limited, in Latin America, most notably in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, and in some African countries such as Lesotho, Mauritius and Madagascar.

This expansion in women’s employment has mostly occurred in labour-intensive, low *value-added* and low-wage export sectors of manufacturing (e.g. garments, textiles, leather, toys). Figure 6 illustrates the share of women in total employment in major manufacturing sub-sectors using the most recent data from the International Labour Organization (ILO). It emerges that women still dominate employment in low-skilled manufacturing sub-sectors such as apparel and food products. Women also hold significant shares of employment in assembly lines in sectors such as electronics and electrical products.

Figure 6. Women’s share of employment in key manufacturing sub-sectors in developing countries (per cent)



Source: UNCTAD secretariat calculations based on the ILOStat database.

Note: Data come from household surveys for each country based on the most recent available year.

These sectors are characterized by low-quality jobs and limited prospects for functional upgrading towards higher-value-added activities. In this regard, the term “feminization of labour” refers to both the increase in women’s share of employment and to the extension to men of unfavourable working conditions (e.g. low wages, job insecurity, etc.) that characterize jobs traditionally occupied by women (Standing, 1989, 1999). The feminization of labour in manufacturing is mainly driven by the lower-wage and more-flexible labour of women, as discussed further in this module.

Evidence based on a global data set shows that trading firms (i.e. exporters, importers, GVC participants and foreign firms) have a higher female employment share than non-trading firms, controlling for firm characteristics such as firm output, capital intensity and total factor productivity (Rocha and Winkler, 2019).⁹ Among the countries covered, the share of women in exporting firms exceeds 50 per cent in countries like Morocco, Romania and Viet Nam. A few aspects of this empirical finding are worth highlighting (Rocha and Winkler, 2019):

- This effect is much higher for production workers (e.g. production, craft, and repair occupations, machine operators, transporters, labourers) than non-production workers (e.g. managers, sales, administration). Hence women are concentrated in low-skill production in these countries – supporting the feminization of labour argument.
- This effect is strongest for exporters and GVC participants in low-tech sectors. This shows that women to a large extent benefit from trade openness in the form of employment expansion in low-skill sectors in developing countries.
- Firms with a higher share of women workers have lower wages on average, but this negative correlation is smaller for trading firms than non-trading firms.
- Among trading firms, those with female ownership and management have a higher share of women’s employment than those without female ownership and management.

A “defeminisation” process in traditional export sectors has followed in the later stages of export-oriented industrialization in some developing countries. This

is mainly because firms have a stronger preference for male workers in more technologically advanced production during industrial upgrading (Kucera and Tejani, 2014; Tejani and Kucera, 2021). For example, in the Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China, the fall in women’s employment share in the textiles sector, which was related to technological upgrading in this sector, was the single most important driver of the defeminization of manufacturing employment. It is also the case that labour costs make up a smaller share of total costs in capital-intensive production, and therefore the competitive pressures that lead employers to prefer women over men are alleviated (Tejani and Milberg, 2016; Saraçoğlu et al., 2018). Lack of relevant skills, time poverty, gender stereotypes about jobs, and automation (e.g. digitization and robotization) also play a role in this gender segregation in employment. The *defeminization of labour* is more valid for middle-income developing countries given the high degree of technological upgrading within labour-intensive sectors and the greater role of capital-intensive manufacturing sectors in these countries.

The gender implications of export processing zones

Export processing zones (EPZs) have become engines of employment growth in the context of export-oriented industrialization policies in developing countries. EPZs are generally based on the importation of intermediate inputs for assembly and re-export. As firms in EPZs are footloose companies, governments have provided them with generous incentives such as tax exemptions, regulation exemptions and infrastructure incentives. EPZs are regulated according to their own legal frameworks introduced in each country’s domestic law. Up-to-date statistics on EPZ employment are not available, but there is evidence based on past statistics of feminization of labour in EPZs, especially in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean (Boyenge, 2007).

While EPZs have provided women with employment opportunities and higher wages in most cases, findings on the non-wage dimensions of working conditions are mixed. Women workers dominate employment in EPZs in most developing countries, and EPZs contribute to higher rates of female labour force participation. This seems to reflect the fact that firms in EPZs rely heavily on cheap labour, dominated

⁹ An analysis of data for more than 25,000 manufacturing firms in 64 developing and emerging economies from the World Bank’s Enterprise Surveys based on the latest available year for each country.

by women, to be competitive in international markets, especially in low-skilled manufacturing such as textile and garment sectors. One should note that it is difficult to disentangle this effect from the gender effects of the sectoral composition of EPZs, that is, women are employed more because EPZs tend to concentrate in sectors that traditionally hire women. EPZ firms tend to pay higher wages than non-EPZ ones in most cases (Cirera and Lakshman, 2017).

The results are mixed with respect to the non-wage dimensions of working conditions (e.g. health and safety, working hours) when comparing EPZ firms with firms outside. These findings apply equally to both men and women, so they represent broader labour issues than gender per se. For example, working hours are long in most EPZs but the evidence is inconclusive when compared with the working hours of workers outside EPZs. Similarly, there is a significant amount of evidence documenting restrictions on unionization in EPZs, either by limiting the right to organize or by de facto constraints on these rights. However, the same is true also for non-EPZ firms, so restrictions on unionization rights may reflect general failures in domestic labour institutions rather than being endemic to EPZs. Many factories do not observe basic fire and safety regulations, as demonstrated tragically by building collapses and fires in 2013 in some Bangladeshi garment export factories. Additionally, the precarious nature of work in EPZs makes women especially vulnerable to sexual harassment and violence (Cirera and Lakshman, 2017; ILO, 2016a).

The gender implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in manufacturing

The COVID-19 pandemic hit manufacturing GVCs hard, with important gender implications. The share of GVCs in world trade fell from over 50 per cent to 32 per cent in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Barrientos and Pallangyo, 2020). Many of the issues hindering GVC operation during the pandemic were, however, resolved by the end of 2021. As of early 2022, most economies continued to rely on production networks spanning multiple regions and countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a health crisis combined with a global economic recession, triggering both supply disruptions and demand contraction in GVCs.¹⁰ For example, the garment sector was most severely affected by demand contraction, and electronics by both supply disruption and demand contraction, depending on the sub-industry. Gender-based vulnerabilities in employment become magnified during the pandemic regardless of sector. However, the highly feminized garment sector GVC suffered the most severe demand contraction and experienced permanent job and income losses. Workers in the electronics GVC, where supply disruptions were the pandemic's main channel of influence, were to some extent in a better position to protect their jobs and incomes by continuing to work whether at home or in factories.

Across the board, the common risks that workers endured in the first months of the pandemic were unpaid furloughs, dismissals, non-payment of wages, workplace contagion and health risks, putting the most vulnerable workers, many of whom are women, at greater risk (Tejani and Fukuda-Parr, 2021).

The gendered effects of the pandemic also vary depending on the position of women across GVCs. In higher-value-chain tiers (direct suppliers to lead firms), women dominate low-skilled wage employment in the production of garment and food products, but with low employment protection. Therefore, they are slower to be re-employed as production picks up. In lower-value-chain tiers (suppliers contracted by higher-value-tier suppliers or indirectly via intermediaries), women are concentrated in informal and home-based work in manufacturing and in unpaid family labour in agriculture. There is little comprehensive data on them, but non-governmental organizations report that those organized in producer groups or informal worker organizations were affected less (Barrientos and Pallangyo, 2020).

The gender implications of technological change and automation

Automation in manufacturing has implications for the gendered employment effects of trade openness because men and women are not equally distributed across the tasks being automated. Women in general

¹⁰ Shipment delays, raw material shortages or lockdown restrictions during the pandemic resulted in supply disruptions characterized by the temporary under-utilization of capacity and eventual recovery of production if demand was intact. In contrast, with demand contraction, widespread firm closures and industrial distress may lead to permanent job and income losses for workers.

are over-represented in routine or repetitive tasks that are more likely to be automated than those tasks that require complex cognitive skills and judgement. Automation leads to both job displacement and job creation and increases the possibility of reshoring or nearshoring, for example, in the garment sector by reducing the labour requirements for production (Tejani and Fukuda-Parr, 2021). Even though automation creates new and higher-skilled job positions, however, women may not be able to access these jobs due to lacking the skills required or to employers' discrimination.

Trade-induced technological change may also work to the advantage of women workers in certain settings.¹¹ If technological change is not labour-saving but complements labour, it may increase the relative demand for women workers by reducing the need for physically demanding skills in production tasks, with no effect on non-production tasks, as shown for Mexico (Juhn et al., 2014).¹² Similarly, UNCTAD carried out several case studies and found that export tariff liberalization (i.e. reduction of tariffs faced by exporting firms in export markets) has a positive association with women's share of total employment only in production tasks in manufacturing firms in the cases of East African Community countries (except Burundi) (UNCTAD, 2017a), the Southern Africa Development Community region (UNCTAD, 2017b) and the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur) countries (except Brazil) (UNCTAD, 2018a). This might be reflecting the positive implications of trade-induced technological upgrading for women workers' relative productivity and employment in production tasks. It might also be an indication of women being a source of labour-cost advantages for exporting firms thanks to existing gender wage gaps – an issue explored in more detail in Module 2.

Women's employment in higher-value-added manufacturing sectors

Although women's employment is traditionally associated with low-value-added manufacturing exports, women also hold a significant share of employment in certain high-value-added sectors. For example, women hold a dominant share of employment in medical device GVCs. The medical device industry

is a high-tech and high-value manufacturing sector with a strong presence of women. A relatively small number of global lead firms dominate production in the industry. While they historically based production in developed countries, increasing price pressure from buyers led to offshoring of production to developing countries to increase economic efficiency, harness qualified human capital abroad, and reach new markets. Skilled and semi-skilled workers constitute the workforce of the industry and hold permanent jobs, as opposed to contractual labour arrangements seen in other manufacturing GVCs. From a gender perspective, the industry is characterized by sector-wide gender equity and a high share of women in employment compared to manufacturing as a whole. For example, in the leading exporters of medical devices, women hold 44 per cent of employment in the United States, 50 per cent in China, and 59 per cent in Mexico. Box 3 highlights the medical device GVC from a gender perspective through the cases of Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

Finally, it is important to note that better working conditions also have a positive impact on firms' performance besides their direct impact on workers' wellbeing. This points to the importance of multi-stakeholder initiatives on decent work. For example, a 2018 assessment of the impact on firms in Indonesia, Jordan, and Viet Nam of the Better Work Programme, a joint initiative of the ILO and the International Finance Corporation, found that firms that participated in the programme experienced an increase in productivity, wages and profits (Aleman-Castilla, 2020).

The cases of Bangladesh and Cambodia can be compared in this context. Low wages in the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh helped it withstand the sunset of the *Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA)* in 2005 and the global financial crisis of 2008–2009. However, the prevailing low wages alongside rising costs of living and a food price hike in 2008 eroded the standard of living for female workers (Hossain, 2011). Moreover, Bangladesh gave in to strong pressures to cut labour costs and indirectly eroded already poor working conditions (Berik and van der Meulen Rodgers, 2010).

¹¹ Trade-induced technological change can occur through two channels. First, both import-competing and exporting firms invest in technological upgrading to improve their competitiveness. Second, increased trade enables the inflow of new imported machinery and intermediate goods and hence induces technological change (Pieters, 2018).

¹² Production tasks mostly coincide with blue-collar jobs, while non-production tasks refer to white-collar jobs.

Box 3. The medical device global value chain: A high road to female employment?

Both Costa Rica and Dominican Republic are emerging producers in the medical device industry, and both consider the industry as a priority sector for export diversification and upgrading. Costa Rica's participation in the medical device industry dates to 1985, with export growth beginning in the early 2000s. By 2016, the sector accounted for 17 per cent of the country's exports. The Dominican Republic entered the industry in the late 1990s but gained significant momentum after 2006. By 2016, the sector accounted for 12 per cent of the country's exports. In both countries, global value chain (GVC) participation is mainly through the investments of global lead firms.

There is strong participation of women in the industry workforce in both countries compared to employment in other export processing zones (EPZs) and in overall manufacturing (box table 3.1). The jobs held by women are characterized by permanent contracts, offer similar or higher wages than other manufacturing sectors in EPZs in these countries, and provide opportunities for training and skill development. However, there is clear gender segregation in employment across both components manufacturing and assembly stages of the GVC. Women are concentrated in production roles in both stages (e.g. line jobs such as putting together components or final goods) and are underrepresented in technical positions (e.g. machine operators). While men are also concentrated in production, a larger share of them hold technical and professional jobs. There is a high degree of female intensity of employment in production jobs: 74 per cent of the workforce in assembly and 67 per cent in components production are women. There is close to gender parity in technical and professional roles (e.g. industrial engineering, finance and human resources). Foreign ownership of lead firms and their diversity and inclusion goals have contributed to greater gender equality in the industry. However, women still have limited representation in mid-level management (29 per cent) and senior leadership (24 per cent) roles. Finally, upgrading in medical device GVCs is associated with stable or increasing female intensity – unlike the defeminization tendency in traditional manufacturing GVCs.

Box table 3.1. Female share of employment (per cent)

	Medical devices	Export processing zones	Manufacturing
Costa Rica	53	40	34
Dominican Republic	67	49	31

Source: Bamber and Hamrick (2019).

Note: Costa Rica: Services, Plastics, Metalworks, Electrical & Electronics, Food and Textiles & Apparel; Dominican Republic: Services, Textile & Apparel, Footwear, Jewellery, Agri-processing and Tobacco, Electrical & Electronics.

In contrast, Cambodia managed to stay resilient in the post-MFA era while retaining low-wage workers without further degradation of wages. As the MFA was phasing out, Cambodia pursued a unique trade agreement with the United States and obtained an additional quota for its exports that was 18 per cent higher than it was entitled to originally (Sibbel and Boormann, 2007). This programme, in partnership with the ILO offered positive trade incentives in exchange for proven enforcement of better *labour standards* under the ILO's Better Factories Cambodia Programme. This has resulted in remarkably improved working conditions under increased monitoring of compliance and is even associated with a reduction of the gender wage gap and discrimination against women, in stark contrast to the non-textile manufacturing sector, which was unaffected by the agreement (Berik and van der Meulen Rodgers, 2010; Samaan and Mourelo, 2018).

The case of services

The services sector can be divided into two groups: traditional services that involve direct interaction between sellers and buyers (e.g. wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food services, education, health, and services for private households); and modern services that make intensive use of information and communications technology (ICT) (e.g. financial, business, and professional services of various kinds). One should note that many traditional services such as education and health are also delivered remotely by making use of ICT. In developing countries, services generate around half of women's employment, and there are more job opportunities for women in traditional services.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), introduced in 1995 to liberalize and bring down

the costs of services trade, defines services trade in four modes of supply: mode 1 - cross-border supply, mode 2 - consumption abroad, mode 3 - commercial presence, and mode 4 - presence of natural persons.¹³ Despite the increasing role of services trade over time, trade in goods, especially in manufacturing, has a stronger employment-generation capacity than trade in services. There is still a need for considering trade policies for manufacturing and services jointly due to the increased “servisification” of production – that is, the inclusion of services components in the production of goods (Lassman and Mulder, 2021).

In many developing countries, services trade provides jobs for women mainly in tourism, BPO, *cross-border trade* (both informal and small-scale trade) and e-commerce. Female migrant labour in domestic and healthcare sectors abroad is another important and largely undocumented part of services trade (Lassman and Mulder, 2021). Although to a lesser extent, traded professional services (e.g. legal, medical, accountancy, auditing services) have also increased their share in women’s employment in part due to improvements in women’s education levels (Sauvé, 2020) and to tradability using IT. This sub-section presents case studies on the tourism and BPO sectors,¹⁴ two major tradable services sectors that are important for women’s employment. Module 2 will cover the case of cross-border trade and female migrant work.

Tourism is one of the key services export sectors and provides both direct employment opportunities (e.g. hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, aircrafts, resorts, shopping outlets, etc.) and indirect employment opportunities (e.g. restaurant suppliers, construction facilities, handicraft producers, etc.) (UNWTO and ILO, 2014). Globally, women account for 54 per cent of tourism employment, much higher than their share in the broader economy (39 per cent). This ratio gets as high as 60 per cent in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. The gender pay gap in the hotel and restaurant sector is smaller than in other sectors. There are a higher number of women employers in the hotel and restaurant sector,

and more ministerial positions in tourism are held by women than in other sectors. However, men overall hold more professional and high-skilled positions and receive more education and training than women in the sector (UNWTO, 2019). Technology helps close these gender gaps by increasing training opportunities and helping entrepreneurs access the tourism market through online training and sales/marketing platforms. Moreover, tourism policies are becoming more *gender-sensitive* over time (UN Women, 2019).

However, the quality of jobs held by women in tourism is rather poor, often characterized by long working hours, high turnover rates, subcontracting and strong seasonal fluctuations. There is also a high degree of gender segregation in tourism employment. Women workers are often concentrated in lower-skilled positions (e.g. hotel receptionists, housekeeping, gift shop attendants, and waitresses) while men hold relatively more jobs in higher-paid positions (e.g. tour operators, managers of travel agencies) (ECLAC, 2014; UNCTAD, 2017a, 2020b).

Business process outsourcing is another important sector for women’s employment in services. The BPO sector is highly concentrated and dominated by large IT firms headquartered in developed countries as well as some mature firms in India that deliver services to customers globally through a network of delivery centres in low-cost developing countries (Gereffi and Fernandez-Stark, 2010). Globally, women represent 71 per cent of total full-time equivalent workers in the global call centre industry (Hultgreen, 2018), and it is an attractive sector for relatively skilled young female workers in developing countries. Gender segregation in employment is also evident in the BPO sector: women mostly carry out routine tasks while men concentrate more in higher-skilled and management jobs. Long and inflexible shifts, the stigma associated with female night work, a strong gender bias in role assignment, and a lack of maternity leave and childcare facilities are among the constraints women face in the BPO sector (Lassman and Mulder, 2021). Box 4 presents a case study of the call centre sector in Egypt.

¹³ Foreign direct investment (FDI) (mode 3) is considered a traded service for international trade policy purposes and is covered by the GATS and other trade agreements in addition to being subject to bilateral investment treaties. FDI and investment in general are not covered in this module, as they constitute a large field and goes beyond the focus on trade openness and trade policy.

¹⁴ BPO is part of the larger information technology and business process management sector and consists of the offshoring of enterprise resource, human resources and customer relationship management.

Box 4. Gender implications of employment in the call centre sector: The case of Egypt

Egypt has emerged as a top destination for offshoring services and become a desired destination for call centres thanks to having a low-wage workforce with young and educated people, and good infrastructure. The country has actively supported the development of services related to information and communications technology, and collaborated with lead firms on strategy, policy, workforce development and marketing. Moreover, Egypt, together with other countries in the MENA region, has undertaken legislative reforms and led initiatives to facilitate women's participation in the labour market and enhance their rights at work.

The call centre workforce is composed of young university graduates, and women account for 60 per cent of the workforce in most call centres. However, women are overrepresented mostly among frontline workers. They are more likely to be in positions such as customer service agents or low-complexity technical support positions, even though women constitute 60 per cent of computer engineering graduates in Egypt. Both employers' perception of women as a temporary workforce and women's lack of awareness about higher-skilled positions contribute to this outcome.

Women face gender-intensified constraints with respect to education level, foreign language skills, time, geographical location of call centres, social and cultural norms, and management skills. There are institutional factors that limit the realization of the full capacity of young people.

Suggested policy options:

- Policies to reduce the reproductive responsibilities of women (e.g. services for childcare and care of the elderly, work programmes that adapt to women's schedules)
- Awareness-raising about career advancement opportunities in the call centre sector for women with technical degrees
- Gender-based scholarships to study technical subjects
- Awareness-raising by the private sector about the type of work carried out during night shifts
- Implementation of skills certification programmes to overcome gender bias in role assignment
- Policies and practices that encourage women to build their networks, such as professional women's associations and mentorship programmes
- Use of online training platforms to increase women's access to training and skill development
- Public provision and/or support to the private sector regarding gender-sensitive benefits (e.g. maternity leave, childcare facilities and transport)
- Achieving a balance between cost-based competitiveness and decent working conditions.

Sources: Ahmed (2013); OECD/ILO/CAWTAR (2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, workers in the BPO sector were in a better position to protect their jobs and incomes by continuing to work at home, but experiencing the overlapping of the spheres of production and social reproduction (Tejani and Fukuda-Parr, 2021).

Women's share in employment decreases as the value-added content of services exports increases. One such example is the information technology outsourcing (ITO) sector, where women constitute only a quarter of the total technical and engineering staff. *Gender norms and stereotypes* become strong in the technology world dominated by men. Women are underrepresented in both Silicon Valley tech jobs and in technology hubs in South and East Asia (e.g. India, Singapore) (Lassman and Mulder, 2021).

Automation also has gendered effects in services mainly because it reduces the labour requirements

in many sectors. For example, in BPO, artificial-intelligence-based services may replace those provided by human beings. Or, in lower-skilled services such as food services, the use of Internet-based applications for giving orders may reduce the labour demand for certain job categories, such as waitresses etc. In both sectors, women hold a significant share of employment and are likely to be disproportionately affected by these developments.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit women in services employment harder than men. This is because women are employed more than men in services sectors that face larger trade disruption due to COVID-19-related travel restrictions and social distancing measures (GATS modes 2 and 4) (World Bank and WTO, 2020). Box 5 discusses the implications of the pandemic on women's employment in tourism.

Box 5. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women employed in the tourism sector

Sectors such as tourism and hospitality were hit hard by international travel restrictions that countries imposed to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the economic pressures of the pandemic, enterprises were inclined to first lay off workers in low-skilled, casual, seasonal and informal jobs while keeping those in high-skilled or permanent positions. Moreover, as coping strategies, firms may also choose to lower wages or shift workers to informal or part-time work arrangements, worsening the already unclear terms of employment in tourism. Both factors affect women more adversely as they make up the bulk of employees in tourism, especially under the more instable contractual settings. Other sectors that depend on tourism and employ a large share of women, including food services and handicrafts, have also been hurt.

The adverse impact of the pandemic on tourism is especially severe for small economies that rely on tourism as their main economic activity, such as small island developing states (SIDS). Tourism provides more than half of total export revenue in 20 SIDS and more than 30 per cent in 29 SIDS. Women constitute more than half of those employed in the accommodation and food services sectors – the core tourism-related economic activities – in 20 of 28 SIDS for which data are available. Therefore, the adverse gender impact of tourism contraction due to the pandemic is felt more severely by women in SIDS.

Strategies to cope with the adverse implications of an economic shock like the pandemic require both short- and medium-term policy measures. Incentive programmes for job retention through wage subsidies and/or social security and other fiscal payment relief measures are important to prevent job losses in the short term. Income support schemes such as unemployment benefits need to be given or extended covering both formal and informal sectors for those who are laid off. Direct income support and cash transfers are needed for own-account workers, and measures to ease liquidity constraints are needed for tourism enterprises. Infrastructure programmes to better link tourism with the rest of the economy, as well as education and training programmes, are important in the medium term for the recovery of tourism sector.

Sources: Zarrilli and Aydinler-Avsar (2020) and UNWTO (2021).

Questions for discussion

- What does “feminization of labour” imply? What factors explain this phenomenon observed in many developing countries?
- Explain the factors behind gender segregation in employment. Does trade reduce women’s segregation in particular types of sectors and occupations? If no, in what ways could this be achieved?

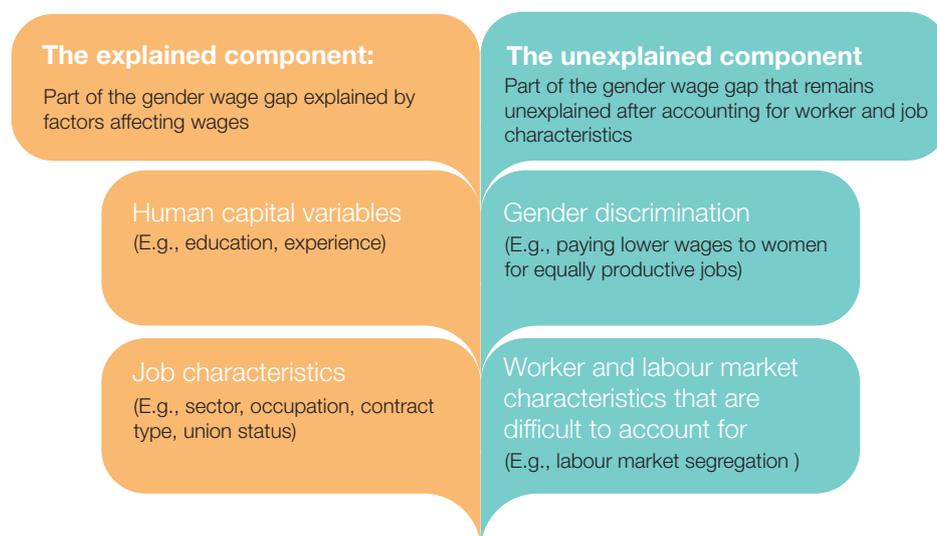
1.2.2. WAGE EFFECTS

This section looks at the implications of trade openness for wage levels (for both men and women) and the gender wage gap. First, it is important to clarify the meaning and measurement of the gender wage gap. The gender wage gap is a relative measure of gender inequality in earnings. It is commonly measured as the difference between male and female average wages expressed as a percentage of male average wages.¹⁵ In this sense, the gender wage gap indicates the disadvantage or advantage that women have in terms of men’s average earnings.¹⁶ This total observed gender wage gap is commonly referred to as the raw gender wage gap, and can be decomposed into an explained and unexplained (or residual) component (figure 7).

¹⁵ It is common to use hourly wages in the calculation of the gender wage gap because women work fewer hours than men in general.

¹⁶ For example, a gender wage gap of 30 per cent indicates that women earn 30 per cent less than men and are thus in a position of disadvantage; a gender wage gap of –10 per cent suggests that women earn 10 per cent more than men and are thus in a position of advantage.

Figure 7. What constitutes the gender wage gap?



Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

This report has already shown that trade openness created employment opportunities in export-oriented sectors in most developing countries. But what about earnings? Has trade openness increased the wage levels for men and women compared to alternative sources of income? Has trade liberalization contributed to narrowing the gender wage gap? These are the questions that will be answered next.

There are mixed findings on the gender wage effects of trade openness. For example, participation in GVCs has not improved the relative wages of female workers in India (Deb, 2021). However, in Cambodia and Sri Lanka, apparel exports benefitted women in both employment and wage-level terms (box 6). Overall, there is more evidence in favour of positive wage effects of trade liberalization for workers, especially in manufacturing, compared to alternatives in agriculture (Papyrakis et al., 2012; World Bank and WTO, 2020).

Box 6. The gendered wage effects of trade openness in Cambodia and Sri Lanka in the pre- and post- Multi-Fibre Arrangement periods

Based on an analysis of household and labour force surveys from 1992 to 2015, Robertson et al. (2018) find large positive wage premiums and a closing of the male-female wage gap during the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) eras, but smaller premiums and a widening wage gap after the end of the MFA in both countries.

Women constitute 74 per cent of apparel sector employment in Sri Lanka and 78 per cent in Cambodia – much higher than their averages in total employment (49 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively). In both countries, the labour force working in apparel is more educated than the country average, and men working in the apparel sector are more educated than women. In both countries, wages are higher in textiles and garments than in agriculture but lower than the economy-wide average.

Empirical analysis suggests that there is a wage premium for apparel sector employment in both countries. Specifically, apparel jobs pay more than the alternatives for similar individuals (generally younger, unmarried, less-educated females), even though the wage level in the apparel sector is low by international standards. In the pre-MFA period (before 2005), the apparel wage premium was 31.7 per cent in Cambodia and 6 per cent in Sri Lanka. In both countries, this wage premium declined in the post-MFA era following the global decline in apparel prices. The male wage premium increased in both Cambodia and Sri Lanka in the post-MFA period, widening the gender wage gap after 2005. In the most recent period covered in the analysis (after 2011), the apparel wage premium started to rise again in Cambodia and the male-female wage differential fell. This might be because, in 2011, Cambodia started switching its export destination from the United States to the European Union, where apparel prices fell much less than in the United States market.

In addition to employment and wage effects, working conditions directly affect workers' wellbeing through the number of hours worked overtime, the extent which a work environment is hazardous, social benefits, or workplace discrimination. The Cambodian and Sri Lankan governments followed different strategies to improve working conditions in the apparel sector. Sri Lanka designed international and local campaigns to improve the image of the apparel sector and working conditions (e.g. an international campaign entitled Garments without Guilt in 2006, and a local campaign entitled Abhimani, meaning pride, in 2008). Working conditions are still less than ideal despite these efforts. According to ILO data (ILO, 2016a), labour costs in Sri Lanka are lower than in China and India. Besides low wages, other issues include a lack of appointment letters, long working hours, high work intensity, and denial of the right of association and collective bargaining, particularly in smaller firms. Cambodia has a good record of labour compliance because of the Better Factories Cambodia Programme that began in 1999. Apparel export quotas that Cambodia received from the United States were directly linked to compliance with labour standards until the expiration of United States quotas in 2004. However, the government encouraged the apparel sector to continue with the programme to maintain its good reputation in terms of labour standards in order to attract foreign investors.

Sources : Robertson et al. (2018) ; ILO (2016a).

Questions for discussion

- Many poor women in low-income countries are engaged in subsistence agriculture and informal and low-skilled services. How can trade openness help improve their wellbeing through wage employment opportunities in each broad sector?
- Suppose that female employment has recently increased in your country, mostly because of the development of a new EPZ. At the same time, suppose that there is evidence of poor compliance with labour standards. If you were a policymaker, which recommendations would you put forward to address this problem, while maintaining international competitiveness?

shares are 21 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa, 14 per cent in West Africa and 16 per cent in Asia (ITC, 2015).

Differences in the level and type of entrepreneurship have a significant effect on the economic performance of enterprises, on their capacity to contribute to a country's development, and on the entrepreneurs themselves. While dynamic and opportunity-driven entrepreneurship may have significant positive effects on those aspects, entrepreneurs who by necessity run survival-oriented enterprises are typically less innovative, operate mostly in low-productivity and low-value-added activities, produce traditional goods and services with established technologies, and are generally in the *informal economy*.¹⁷ Such firms, which include many women, tend to remain at a microenterprise level (UNCTAD, 2018b).

1.3. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurial activity contributes to economic growth by stimulating job creation, improving skills and encouraging technological innovation. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) account for about 90 per cent of businesses and provide 60 to 70 per cent of formal employment in developing countries and up to 50 per cent of employment worldwide. On average, women own 27 per cent of enterprises in the Latin American and Caribbean countries and 24 per cent East Africa – the two regions with the highest degree of women's *entrepreneurship*. Those same

Entrepreneurship occurs within an economic and social context that is gendered. This has a bearing on the types of entrepreneurs who arise and their chances of success. Women are less likely than men to own and run a business partly because they consider it riskier than salaried work. Women-owned enterprises in general experience supply-side constraints (e.g. limited access to finance, inputs, capital equipment and technology, and networks) more severely than men-owned enterprises. They also face gendered constraints such as time poverty and an unequal legal setting with respect to entrepreneurial activity.

¹⁷ The financial and non-financial costs of the registration process, a lack of information on the process, and greater uncertainty about the benefits of formalization contribute to entrepreneurs' decision to remain informal (UNCTAD, 2018b).

Figure 8 provides a visual presentation of the main constraints faced by women entrepreneurs while starting and running their businesses and exporting. These constraints are not in isolation but are interrelated and feed each other. Among them, financial constraints and unstable business, economic and political environments emerge as the top areas to be addressed.

As a reflection of these constraints, women-owned enterprises are on average smaller and less productive than men-owned enterprises, and they are concentrated mostly in traditional and non-tradable services. Indeed, most women entrepreneurs own MSMEs, the majority of which are not engaged in trade. The percentage of women entrepreneurs with sales of 25 per cent or more to international customers is very low across developing regions (4 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa, 5 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 10 per

cent in East/South Asia and the Pacific). Business discontinuance among women entrepreneurs is also the highest in low-income countries, with financial hurdles being the main reason (GERA, 2019).

Since women-owned enterprises export less, they are unable to benefit from opportunities for expansion and economies of scale through direct engagement in international markets. However, they may have indirect engagement in trade by selling to domestic firms or affiliates of foreign multinational enterprises. Even though this creates opportunities for these women entrepreneurs, it is the multinational enterprises or big domestic firms that benefit the most through direct engagement in trade, and not the subcontracted small businesses. Women-owned enterprises also import less, limiting their access to incorporate potentially cheaper imported inputs into their production processes (Korinek et al., 2021).

Figure 8. Major barriers to women's entrepreneurship and their capacity to export

Barrier	Examples
Financial constraints	Information asymmetry, lack of credit history, inadequate collateral
Lack of infrastructural support	Technology and business services
Unfavourable business, economic and political environments	Complicated regulations, complex requirements to register businesses and to export, bureaucracy, bribery
Fewer and more shallow professional networks	Business networks often dominated by men
Lack of entrepreneurship training and education	Managerial and financial planning
Gender discrimination	Entrepreneurship is seen as men's domain
Work-family conflict	Limited time to manage the business and engage with networks
Societal gender norms inhibiting women's mobility	Limited mobility to trade, higher risk of violence at customs compared to men
Personality-based constraints	Lack of self-confidence
Small firm size of women-owned businesses in general	Lack of resources to expand into international markets; when they do, relatively smaller trade volumes and therefore higher trade cost
Gender gap in business profits, and its adverse effects on women entrepreneurs' capacity to expand and start exporting	Women entrepreneurs' concentration in relatively less-profitable sectors (vertical segregation), their lagging behind men-owned businesses within the same sector (horizontal segregation)

Sources : Brenton et al. (2014), Goldstein et al. (2019), Higgins (2012), ITC (2018), Korinek et al. (2021) (based on a survey of enterprises with a presence on social media platforms), Panda (2018) (based on a review of 35 studies in 90 developing countries); UNCTAD (2020a).

The challenges that impede women entrepreneurs from exporting are similar to those that they report for growing their businesses more generally. This shows that policy responses to these challenges, as in many other areas, need to be focused more on domestic policies than on trade-related ones. Large geographical distance from the home country, securing export financing, and different regulations in destination markets were reported as the main trade-specific constraints by women entrepreneurs according to a survey of MSMEs with a presence on social media platforms (Korinek et al., 2021). It has also been shown that policy measures that facilitate trade benefit MSMEs to a greater extent than large firms, hence there is large scope for policy to advance women entrepreneurs' capacity to trade. For example, foreign trade promotion agencies can serve as an instrument to support women entrepreneurs' capacity to trade. These agencies, present in most countries, provide tools and services for women entrepreneurs to facilitate their internationalization process. They offer training, market information and technical assistance for business plans and financial issues, among other services, and help women-led entrepreneurs meet standards and requirements for export markets.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have had a greater impact on business activity by women. There was a sharper decline in the number of women starting

or running a new business in 2020 than men, possibly reflecting women's higher burden of domestic work during the pandemic (GERA, 2021), and women-owned MSMEs were more likely to not survive the pandemic than men-owned MSMEs (ITC, 2020a). The next sections look at case studies of women entrepreneurs in each sectoral context.

The case of agriculture

Since 1995, food imports per capita in net food-importing developing countries have increased by 300 per cent and, in low-income food-deficit countries, by over 500 per cent. The imports of cheap food following from trade liberalization can reduce the domestic price of agricultural produce and erode the already low earnings of subsistence farmers, a group dominated by women (UNCTAD, 2020a). This is a bigger issue for net food-importing countries and may result in food insecurity. A viable solution would be to make small entrepreneurs in import-competing agricultural sectors more competitive through increased investment and technological upgrading.

In the case of export cash crops, small farmers have difficulties competing in international markets and face specific constraints, many of which are gendered. Box 7 presents the coffee value chain in Central America.

Box 7. The coffee value chain in Central America from a gender perspective

Coffee is typically considered a "male" crop in Latin America, with an assumed marginal involvement of women; hence the actual labour women put into coffee production often goes unnoticed. In fact, a study of fair-trade cooperatives in Mexico and Guatemala found that women perform up to twice as much coffee labour as men due to the labour-intensive nature of their tasks, especially in the presence of low levels of capitalization (Lyon et al., 2010).

The coffee value chain consists of a long season of fieldwork, followed by harvest, cherry processing, transporting, marketing and sales. The division of labour is highly segregated by gender. Women tend to play major roles in the initial segments of the value chain – that is, labouring in the field, harvesting and processing – while men concentrate more on the higher end of transportation, marketing and sale. Additionally, women farmers bear the double burden of combining farm work with unpaid care and housework responsibilities (SCAA, 2015).

Contrary to popular belief, most coffee producers in Central America are smallholders. For example, in 2017, small and medium-sized producers accounted for 86 per cent of total coffee production in Honduras. In Guatemala, smallholders account for 80 per cent of the 125,000 total coffee farmers but produce 60 per cent of total coffee production. Smallholders are inefficient and vulnerable to changing conditions, and they lack the means to invest in new technology or to take risks in terms of experimenting with new techniques (Global Affairs Canada, 2018). This in turn adversely affects their productivity and income-generation capacity.

Data on women's roles and gender relations in the coffee value chain are quite scarce. The International Women's Coffee Alliance has recently attempted to provide an estimate of the number of women working to produce coffee in major coffee-producing countries (box table 7.1). Among the countries covered, women constitute more than 30 per cent of coffee producers in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Rwanda and Colombia.

Box table 7.1. Women entrepreneurs in coffee value chains

	Estimated number of women producers	Women as a per cent of total producers	Year of estimate
Costa Rica	15,450	34	2013
El Salvador	6,700	33	2013
Guatemala	4,000 to 7,000	19-22	2016-2017
Honduras	17,978	19	2016
Burundi	117,990	20	2006-2007
Rwanda	113,846	32	2015
Colombia	164,000	30	2015

Source: Church (2018).

Additionally, the transition from subsistence farming to export cash crops is increasingly associated with men taking over female-intensive crops. Once a crop commercializes and becomes profitable, male farmers participate more in that crop, dominating the distribution of cash crops and controlling sale proceeds. This happens even though women are just as involved as men in the cultivation of export crops, especially as unpaid labour on family farms (UNCTAD, 2015). For instance, in Senegal, women are active in contract-farming activities in horticulture but without any jurisdiction over the income generated from that farming, as payments are often received by male household members (Van den Broeck et al., 2018; Maertens and Swinnen, 2012).

Contract farming has existed for decades in most countries, but its use and prominence has grown in recent years, particularly in NTAEs and to secure production for GVCs. Contract farming and other models of structured supply chains offer opportunities for small-scale farmers, but they also raise concerns about over-dependence and power asymmetries between buyers and farmers. The gender ramifications of contracts depend on the circumstances. Some buyers structure their procurement to enable the participation of women, particularly when reputational or sustainability issues are at stake. In this case, the buyers may act as catalysts for the empowerment of rural women. In some situations, off-takers prefer to source from the most commercially oriented farmers to reduce the transaction costs of supervision and counterparty risks. This tends to crowd

out marginal and vulnerable rural smallholders, many of whom are women.

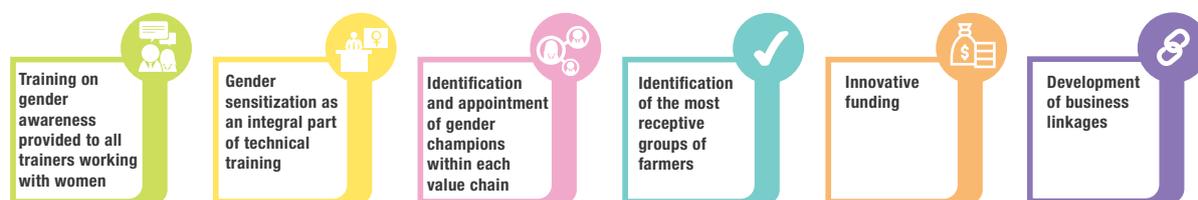
In many developing countries, producer organizations, cooperatives and certification schemes have been instrumental in supporting women's participation in export markets and upgrading in GVCs. They provide farmers with easier access to capital equipment, marketing channels, capacity-building and markets that may be beyond their reach, especially for women (Verhart and Pyburn, 2010; Stein, 2017).

Extension services are a critical component of agricultural production. Gender-sensitive design and provisioning of such services greatly contribute to the empowerment of women farmers and entrepreneurs in agriculture and help them develop their capacity to export. Drivers of successful extension services as illustrated in figure 9.

Expanding trade in high-value NTAEs through GVCs represents a promising opportunity for small-scale producers and processors, including many women entrepreneurs. Small entrepreneurs' participation in GVCs can serve as a means of accessing technology, extension services and other resources provided by lead firms to ensure the high standards for such products.

Voluntary certification schemes are a way of shifting production towards high-value market segments in agricultural exports such as coffee, tea, cocoa and tropical fruits. Box 8 presents good examples of cooperatives in coffee farming that support women's economic empowerment.

Figure 9. What leads to the success of extension services from a gender perspective?



Source: UNCTAD (2020b).

Box 8. Cooperatives and producer organizations to support women coffee farmers: The case of Central America

Café Femenino, a women-owned coffee brand that includes 10 cooperatives of women coffee farmers, including cooperatives in Guatemala and Nicaragua, has had a positive impact on women farmers' land ownership, decision-making power, family income and living conditions in coffee-growing areas. SOPPEXCCA in Nicaragua markets women's coffee under a separate label called "Las Hermanas," helping women develop their technical capacity in production and gain land titles.

Café de Mujer is a women-only coffee certificate and label developed in 2006 by two Guatemalan organizations (MayaCert and Acodihue). It aims to make the work of female coffee producers visible and value their contribution by applying gender-sensitive indicators. Compliance with Café de Mujer standards by member organizations increased women's access to new knowledge, capacity-building and technical aspects of production. Women also increased their representation in governing bodies, gained responsibility for managing the (organic) production process, and, above all, had an increased sense of dignity and pride. Extension services were re-designed to become more gender-sensitive (e.g. schedules that take into account women's reproductive work, introduction of mobile childcare services). All of these interventions promoted gender equality in the coffee value chain.

Sources: *Café Femenino* (2018); Chan (2010); Verhart and Pyburn (2010); World Bank et al. (2009).

In the coffee sector, certification schemes such as Fair Trade, Organic, Rainforest Alliance and Utz Certified have been introduced in several least developed countries. According to the findings of a field survey in 2012 in Uganda, certification programmes had positive gender effects such as increased gender awareness about the equitable division of labour, women's increased access to resources (e.g. through workshops with the mandatory presence of both partners), and women's increased control over sales revenue (e.g. through cooperatives requiring both spouses to be present to receive payments on shipments). They were also associated with better representation of women as extension workers and in leadership positions (Chiputwa and Quaim 2016). Similar positive effects on decision-making power in cooperatives were documented for women in Rwanda, which has one of the highest numbers of certified coffee producers in Africa (Elder et al., 2012). Certification schemes also

bring benefits from which the entire household and not just women benefit, such as increased schooling of children (Van den Broeck and Maertens, 2017).

However, gender equality achievements should not solely be considered as the outcome of certified value chains, but rather should be evaluated in a broader policy framework. For example, increased gender equality in tea value chains in the United Republic of Tanzania is partly due to improved standards, but more importantly reflects long-term socio-technical changes in the country (Loconto, 2015). Also, these findings on certification schemes are not conclusive across all the least developed countries.

The case of manufacturing

Women's entrepreneurship in manufacturing is the highest in the textile and clothing sector, according to ITC data for 20 developing economies.¹⁸ Specifically,

¹⁸ Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka (Asia); Jamaica, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago (Americas); Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, State of Palestine (Middle East and North Africa); Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania (sub-Saharan Africa).

Box 9. Barriers to export for women manufacturing entrepreneurs in Africa: The case of Ghana

More women than men start businesses in Ghana. This makes it an interesting country to investigate with respect to the exporting behaviour of women compared to men entrepreneurs. Ackah et al. (2020) use a panel survey of 880 micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Ghana over 2011–2015 to address this issue. Most of these firms are concentrated in manufacturing of foodstuffs, textiles and clothing, wood products and furniture. The primary owner is a woman in 43 per cent of the firms, but there are three times more male exporters than female exporters. Ninety-eight per cent of women-owned firms are in the textile and clothing and the food and beverages sectors.

Ackah et al. (2020) find that women-owned firms are less likely to export (and optimize their exporting) than men, although once they do export, women-owned firms on average export to the same extent as men-owned exporters. However, women fail to fully capture productivity gains from exporting, hence they fall behind men in terms of learning by exporting. Access to finance and access to infrastructure are the two business constraints that hamper women's participation in exports but not men's, growing the gender gap in the exporting capacity of entrepreneurs in manufacturing.

Although women rank access to finance more highly as a constraint than men, this perceived finance gap does not explain the mediocre export performance of female-led firms. Instead, certain social and cultural constraints are more deeply felt by women entrepreneurs than their male counterparts, and explain the gender gap in exporting.

Some of the solutions to address the gender gap in entrepreneurs' exporting capacity include (i) introducing mentoring programmes and increasing the effectiveness of existing ones (e.g. the Lionesses of Africa Programme); (ii) implementing technological solutions that allow female entrepreneurs to sell their products from home (e.g. E Jumia and Takealot in Africa); (iv) using cooperatives to help women entrepreneurs optimize their exports by spreading the costs of advertising, certifying and distributing their products; and (v) recognizing the cultural and social constraints under which women operate.

Source: Ackah et al. (2020); UN Women (2021).

29 per cent of firms are owned and/or managed by women in the clothing sector. Women entrepreneurs also have a large presence in yarn, fabrics and textiles (24 per cent), computers, telecommunications, and consumer electronics (23 per cent) and, to a lesser degree, miscellaneous manufacturing (20 per cent) and non-electric machinery (18 per cent) (ITC, 2015). Women entrepreneurs face several barriers – some common to all sectors and a few more stringent in manufacturing. Legal and regulatory barriers, such as limits on the right to work, asset ownership and unequal property and inheritance rights, are higher for women. These barriers constrain women from accessing capital and finance. Women entrepreneurs are less likely than men to join formal business networks, depriving them of opportunities for training, information, access to markets, partnerships, and advocacy. Non-tariff measures (e.g. standards or regulations, port handling or customs procedures) are more severely felt by micro and small enterprises. Since women-owned businesses are more likely to be smaller, non-tariff measures disproportionately affect women entrepreneurs (ITC, 2015). Box 9 presents a case study of women entrepreneurs in manufacturing in Ghana.

Unleashing the potential of women-owned enterprises requires supportive government policy toward entrepreneurship, available financing, development of human capital, new markets, and infrastructure support.

The case of services

It is important to introduce policies that facilitate linkages between small manufacturing entrepreneurs, among whom women are overrepresented, and tourism, which represents a way to access broader markets in addition to directly exporting to international markets. Women are more likely to be entrepreneurs in the tourism sector than in other sectors of the economy because there are many options for entrepreneurship in tourism that do not require heavy start-up financing (UNWTO, 2019).

However, even in tourism, access to finance is a major constraint faced by entrepreneurs, especially women. For example, in Vanuatu, female owners of bungalows report that they largely rely on personal savings and cannot expand their businesses due to lack of capital and limited access to credit (Bowman et al., 2009). Box 10 shows how women and men entrepreneurs compare in Kenya's tourism sector.

Box 10. Women entrepreneurs in Kenya's tourism sector

In a study, Christian et al. (2013) explore the gender dimensions of three segments of tourism: tour operations, excursion packages and accommodation providers. The aim is to better understand how gender inequalities affect the sector's competitiveness and its potential to generate a positive development impact. The authors find distinct structural and cultural/societal forces constraining the ability of women to fully participate in and benefit from Kenya's tourism sector. They also present recommendations, applicable beyond Kenya, to improve conditions for women in the sector.

Across all three value-chain segments, it appears that there is gender-based occupational segregation that concentrates women into higher-risk, lower-value and lower-skilled roles. Overall, two-thirds of those employed in tourism are men. Tour operations are predominantly owned by men, especially those that are most profitable and have the best access to financial capital, exclusive destinations and lucrative foreign clientele. Of the 31 tour operations considered "Category A" by the Kenya Association of Tour Operators, only two are run by women. Specific occupations are highly gendered, with higher-profile roles as safari guides and drivers considered most appropriate for men. Women, on the other hand, were far more likely to be found as ticketing agents, receptionists and hospitality workers. Women also were more concentrated in casual, part-time or seasonal positions.

Legal, cultural and societal norms further limit women's participation. Responsibilities in the home as well as cultural norms discourage women's work in more remote destinations, including safari camps. Many smaller tourism-related businesses are family-owned, and the father or sons occupy higher roles while women are expected to provide support. Women from ethnic-tribal groups, such as the Maasai, often lack adequate education and are thus limited to roles as artisans or cultural performers. Customary laws that restrict women's access to land titles were found to directly disadvantage women's ability to capitalize on leasing arrangements, tourism development funds and conservation fees. Finally, the marketing of package tours typically favoured male-dominated aspects of the sector.

Suggested recommendations:

- Mainstream gender issues into national tourism policy
- Promote gender parity through national and international industry associations
- Target training of women to increase and diversify skills
- Promote and market pro-women commercial activities.

Sources: Christian et al. (2013); UNWTO (2019).

Gender norms and stereotypes are another major constraint that limit women entrepreneurs' ability to run and expand their businesses successfully. Time and mobility constraints also affect women entrepreneurs in tourism, which is why homestay tourism is becoming attractive for them. Homestay allows tourists to get a true taste of the local culture, food and traditions by staying at a local home. Given that hosting is closely related to the general household responsibilities that women have to perform, and considering that this activity does not require being away from home, homestays can be a pro-women tourism opportunity (Acharya and Halpenny, 2013).

Women entrepreneurs are indirectly linked to the tourism sector through the production and sales of various products and services, including handicrafts,

garments, local cuisine and art. There is both domestic competition among local women who produce and sell by and large the same products, and import competition with similar imported products, which could adversely affect the success of women's businesses. For example, women in Vanuatu compete fiercely among themselves in local markets to sell handicraft items to tourists. (Bowman et al., 2009).

Establishing direct business linkages between tourism establishments and local suppliers of crafts and other products could be useful to counterbalance some of the negative effects of cheap imports and support livelihoods in local communities. Besides creating jobs, this would help preserve local culture and heritage. Direct sourcing from local producers also allows local women to increase their profits (UNCTAD, 2017a).

Evidence in Ethiopia shows that local women have benefitted substantially from tourist expenditures on their handicrafts, amounting to about 5.5 per cent of total tourist expenditures. Similar outcomes are becoming evident in Burkina Faso through a project called “Down the Salt, Fish, Gold and Cola Routes” that cultivates the direct relationship between tourists and female artisans and locals to promote their handicrafts, arts and local cuisine (UNCTAD, 2017a). In Lao People’s Democratic Republic, crafts made by ethnic minority women are also seen as supporting the local economy because of high local sourcing of raw materials (such as silk, cloth, paper, etc.) (Mitchell and Ashley, 2009). Local linkages are important because small-scale female producers often cannot meet quality standards and obtain certifications to trade internationally, as documented for Vanuatu (Bowman et al. 2009). Similarly, in Shan State, Myanmar, according to field work conducted by UNCTAD in 2020, female farmers report various obstacles to selling in foreign markets, such as the language barrier, lack of information about foreign markets, export procedures, quality standards, etc. (UNCTAD, 2020b). In this context, the tourism sector could increasingly become an outlet for agricultural goods produced by small farmers, many of whom are women, if adequate linkages were to be put in place, as in the case of handicrafts discussed above.

Questions for discussion

- **What are the characteristics of women’s entrepreneurship? In what ways does trade provide better opportunities for women entrepreneurs compared to alternatives in the domestic economy?**
- **Many women in developing countries concentrate in the agricultural sector. In what ways can global value chains support women’s participation in trade in agriculture? Can you think of any example?**

1.4. WOMEN CONSUMERS

This section looks at how trade liberalization affects women as consumers. There are two main channels of influence for the consumption effect. The main channel is through imports of goods that lower prices and increase the variety of goods in import-competing sectors. Women benefit from these changes to the extent that they are the primary consumers of these products. This is especially the case for essential goods necessary for the wellbeing of the household. One should keep in mind that the same changes would harm women workers and entrepreneurs in import-competing sectors. The second, and less evident, channel is through the exports of goods that can lead to an increase in the price of these goods as a greater proportion of output is shipped overseas (Shepherd and Stone, 2017).

The gender implication of the consumption effect depends on the consumption baskets of men and women and how price and variety effects differ across these baskets. The standard data sources for consumption are typically aggregated at the household level. Although they may distinguish between female- and male-headed households, they are insufficiently granular to allow for identifying differences in consumption patterns between men and women (World Bank and WTO, 2020; Shepherd and Stone, 2017).

These shortcomings notwithstanding, some conclusions can be drawn from the data and research that are available. Women tend to spend a higher proportion of their income on food for the household than men, according to the FAO. If trade liberalization lowers the price of basic consumption goods, women as consumers would benefit from it to a greater extent, for instance, as estimated for Cabo Verde¹⁹ and Ghana.²⁰ There is also a gender bias in tariffs for some of the products (box 11).

Another channel for the consumption effect is through cuts in government spending. Following trade liberalization policy, governments lose tariff revenue, which may lead to cuts in government spending unless the revenue loss is offset by a rise in other forms of

¹⁹ It is estimated that a 10 per cent decline in the price of basic foodstuff would lead to a decline in the proportion of people living below the poverty line of 2.6 percentage points in Cabo Verde. This could significantly impact the welfare of female-headed households that spend a large share of their income on food (UNCTAD, 2011).

²⁰ Trade liberalization in agriculture benefited urban women, who were net buyers of food in Ghana. However, it also hurt women farmers who saw their incomes decline due to competition from cheaper imports (Randriamaro, 2005).

Box 11. Are tariffs gender-neutral?

The setting of import tax schedules can differ across otherwise identical gender-specific products, and often impose direct penalties on women consumers. This is labelled the so-called “pink tax” on imported goods. Betz et al. (2021) exploit the unusually sharp distinction in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) between otherwise identical men’s and women’s apparel, the only category where it differentiates products by gender. Their analysis compares nearly 200,000 paired tariff rates on men’s and women’s apparel products (e.g. “women’s cotton shirts” and “men’s cotton shirts”) in 167 countries between 1995 and 2015.

The authors identify 78 product pairs of identical style and material that differ only in whether they are marketed towards men or women, and on which governments can impose different tariff rates. They calculate the pink tax as the difference in the tariff rate within these matched product pairs, and find tariff differentials for nearly 40 per cent of product pairs. While many men’s products also face high tariff rates as individual products, the overall average tariff imposed on all women’s products is higher than the average for men’s products. Across all countries, the average pink tax is about 0.7 per cent, implying that imports of women’s goods, on average, are taxed 0.7 per cent more than imports of men’s goods. In several countries, including developed ones such as Canada and Japan, women are disadvantaged on more than 50 per cent of product pairs.

Betz et al. (2021) also examine the role women’s representation plays in explaining the pink tax penalty faced by women in many countries. In democracies, women’s presence in the legislature is associated with lower import tax penalties on women’s goods, pointing to the role of women’s representation in fighting discriminatory policies. The authors posit that equal representation of women would reduce the annual tax penalty on women by an average of US\$324 million per country and US\$15 billion across countries.

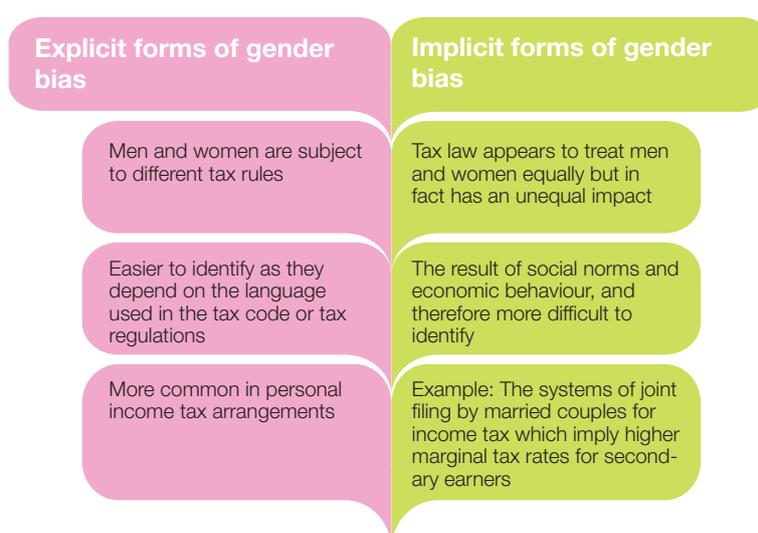
Source : Betz T, et. al (2021).

taxes. In addition, liberalization of some service sectors (e.g. health, education, telecommunications, transport) may adversely affect the availability or affordability of such services. International competition could also induce efficiency and innovation, resulting in higher-quality and lower-cost delivery of these services for consumers. Finally, if losses in tariff revenue are balanced out by a rise in other types of taxes, these

new forms of taxation are likely to have distributional effects across different groups in the society.

A distinction can be made between explicit and implicit gender biases against women in taxation (Stotsky, 1997; Elson, 2006; Barnett and Grown, 2004; Grown and Valodia, 2010; UNDP, 2010) as shown in figure 10.

Figure 10. Implicit and explicit forms of gender bias in taxation



Source: Barnett and Grown (2004); OECD (2022).

Another distinction can be made with respect to the type of taxes (e.g. direct and indirect taxes) being increased to compensate for the loss of revenue. In the case of direct taxes, changes in personal income tax tend to disproportionately impact men, as they usually earn more and own more wealth. Corporate income tax can also have different impacts on men and women, for example, due to preferential tax treatment of different economic sectors or small-scale enterprises (Barnett and Grown, 2004). In the case of indirect taxes, such as value-added, sales, or excise taxes, taxation is based on consumption rather than on income, and affects men and women differently depending on their consumption habits and taxes imposed on different sets of goods and services.

Questions for discussion

- How does trade policy directly affect welfare through the consumption channel? In what ways, do these effects have gender implications?
- Tariff reductions due to trade liberalization may affect women indirectly as consumers of public services. Explain why women are likely to be affected more than men.

1.5. CONCLUSION: MODULE 1

Module 1 has shown that trade openness has expanded formal employment opportunities for many women in developing countries. Women on average experienced an increase in their income compared to alternative forms of employment in agriculture and informal and low-skilled services. However, the evidence on women's relative status compared to men and hence gender equality in the labour market is mixed. In some cases, an increased gender wage gap went hand-in-hand with increased employment for women. Trade openness can also contribute to women's economic empowerment through entrepreneurial activity, in particular, through integration into GVCs. Finally, trade policy that lowers tariffs on consumption goods, especially foodstuff, is likely to increase welfare for poor households, among which women are overrepresented.

2. MODULE 2 – GENDER-BASED INEQUALITIES AND TRADE PERFORMANCE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

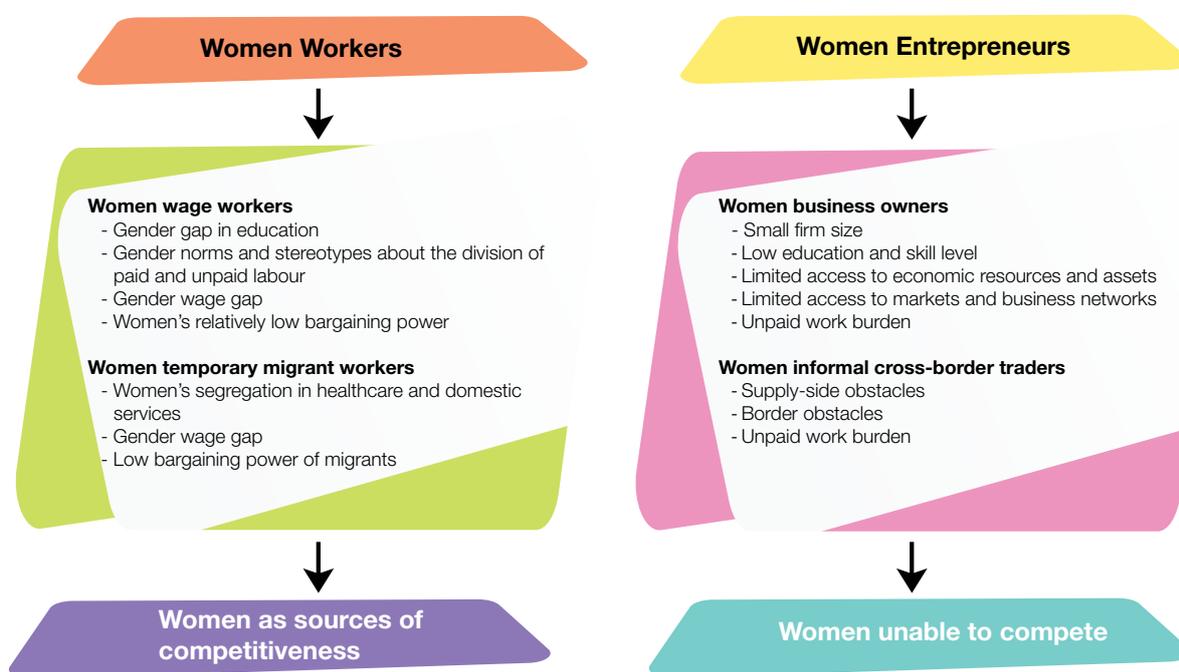
Module 1 looked at how trade affects women as workers, entrepreneurs and consumers. In other words, it examined the impact of trade openness for gender equality. This module now moves to the other side of the two-way relationship between trade and gender and looks at the relationship that runs from gender inequalities to trade in two dimensions: (i) how gender inequalities in the labour market are used by firms to enhance their *export competitiveness*, and (ii) how gender inequalities limit women's capacity to export and run their businesses successfully.

First, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of competitive advantage, or put simply, competitiveness, and explain how the term is used in this module. Competitive advantage is originally a business term. It refers to an attribute that allows a firm to outperform its competitors. It can be established through various ways such as a low-cost strategy, a product differentiation (e.g. high quality) strategy, environmental sustainability, respect for labour standards, and brand image building that make a firm's products appealing to specific consumer segments. Competitiveness has become a broader term that is used in economics and economic policymaking over time, and can be applied at both the enterprise and country levels (UNCTAD, 2004). When applied at the firm level, it relates to profits or market shares. When applied at the country level, it relates to both national income and international trade performance, especially in specific sectors that

are important for employment, productivity or growth potential. Competitiveness may result from both real and monetary factors. In terms of the former, it can result from a relatively strong productivity performance of enterprises or the economy, reflecting capital accumulation, structural change or technological progress. In terms of the latter, it can be the outcome of a depreciation of a country's real effective exchange rate following either a depreciation of its nominal effective exchange rate or a smaller rise in the ratio between wages and productivity (i.e. unit labour costs) than in other countries.

Elson et al. (2007) define the acquisition of competitive advantage as a gendered process. They distinguish between the ways in which gender inequality shapes the roles of women as achievers of competitive advantage and as sources of competitive advantage. Gender inequalities in access to resources, assets, training and market information limit the capacity of women entrepreneurs to compete and to export. Those women become underachievers of competitive advantage in their own enterprises, mainly through lower productivity performance. Gender gaps in power in households and labour markets may provide firms with cost competitiveness through the hiring of low-wage female labour. Those women become sources of competitive advantage for export-oriented firms mainly by enabling those firms to lower unit labour costs. These two processes are illustrated in the subsequent sections through country case studies and by using the framework illustrated in figure 11.

Figure 11. The impact of gender inequalities on trade performance



Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Describe the concept of competitive advantage
- Explain the transmission mechanisms through which gender inequalities affect women's participation in trade
- Give examples of how gender inequalities affect trade performance and export competitiveness of a country
- Propose economic strategies that do not rely on gender inequality to achieve economic growth.

2.2. WOMEN WORKERS

This section once again discusses women's role as workers. This time the aim is to first examine the implications of gender biases or inequalities in the labour market for women's participation as wage workers in international trade, and more specifically in exports of goods. The section then looks at how gender inequalities in various domains of economic

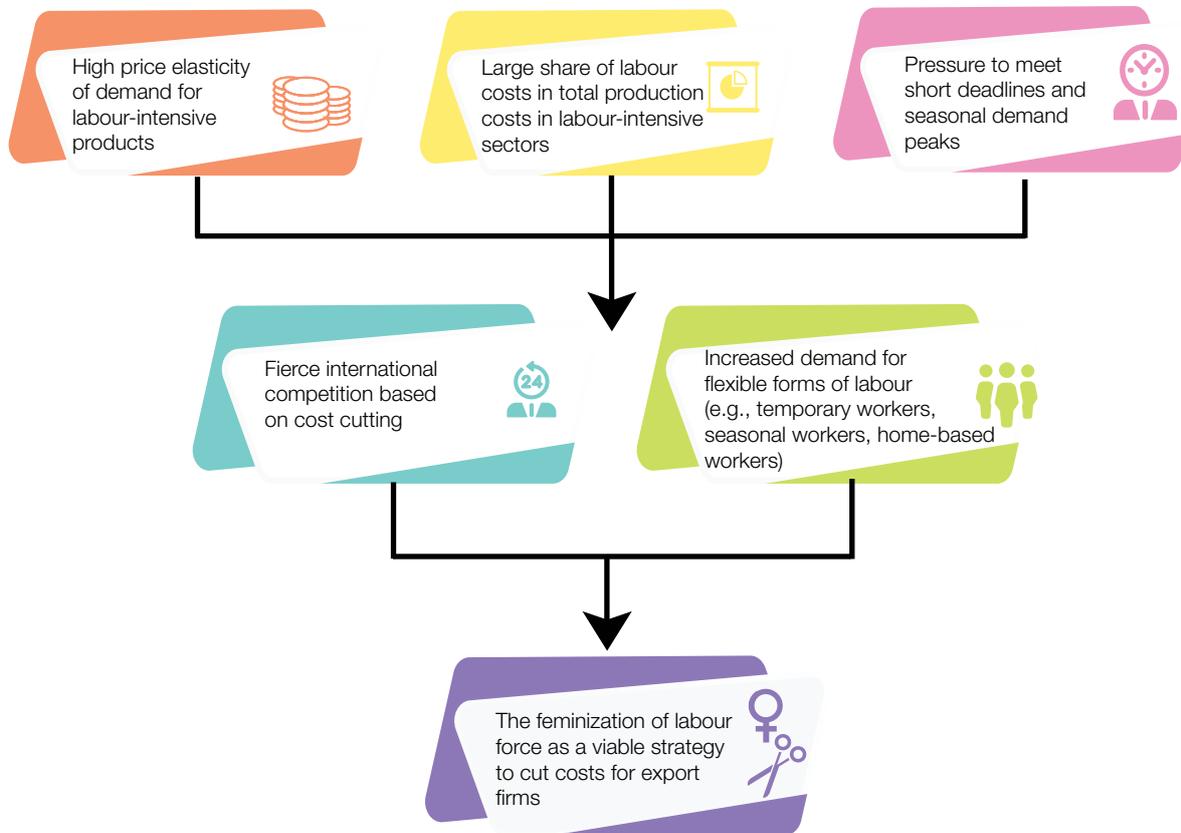
and social life shape women's working conditions as temporary migrant workers – a rising form of providing services abroad.

2.2.1. WOMEN WAGE WORKERS

Module 1 showed that women are employed in large numbers as wage workers in labour-intensive export sectors in many developing countries. What explains this feminization of labour? It is in part a reflection of women's segregation in low-skilled sectors in which developing countries mainly export. It is also a reflection of firms' preference for women workers as a source of competitiveness in international markets thanks to women's lower bargaining power and lower wages relative to men on average.

Figure 12 explains the reasons behind this low-cost strategy of export firms. Box 12 illustrates the case of women wage workers as sources of competitive advantage in the case of Taiwan Province of China.

Figure 12. What lies behind the strategy of firms exporting to international markets?



Source: UNCTAD secretariat based on Seguino (2020).

Box 12. Leveraging gender inequality to achieve competitive advantage: The early stages of industrial development in Taiwan Province of China

In the early 1960s, most of the labour force in Taiwan Province of China was employed in agriculture. During the following three decades, it implemented a three-stage growth strategy based on the expansion of its exports. In the first stage, this export-led strategy relied on labour-intensive manufacturing. In the second stage, capital/technology-intensive sectors were developed and product quality was upgraded to maintain international competitiveness. During the third stage (from the mid-1980s until the end of the century), larger firms operating in high-technology industries started seeking more skilled workers to adopt the new technologies, and others relocated to where labour costs were lower. These policies spurred economic growth as anticipated but coincided with a dramatic change in employment patterns, especially for women.

Starting in the 1960s, during the first stage of the export-oriented growth strategy, women provided a major source of low-wage and unskilled labour for the manufacturing export sector. The gender earning inequalities observed then persisted throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. In the mid-1970s, women represented about 80 per cent of the total workforce in export processing zones. Export factories recruited women from rural areas and schools, thus cutting short their education. In addition, gender-specific job advertisements prevented women from entering high-paid and skilled positions, and women were also excluded from access to training. Initial wages for women were set at 10 to 30 per cent below that of men working in the same occupation. By the 1960s, the labour-intensive manufacturing sectors relied on a massive pool of low-paid, low-skilled unmarried women to feed the labour-intensive phase of export-led industrialization. Despite the increase in female employment rates, gender wage inequality and the segregation of women into low-skilled jobs persisted in Taiwan Province of China throughout the 1960s. In the 1970s, married women were also encouraged to enter the manufacturing labour market through flexible working arrangements that allowed them to also carry out their household duties.

The second stage of the export-led strategy began in the late 1970s, when the productive base gradually progressed to higher-technology products, meaning that firms demanded higher skill levels. However, earlier employment practices had prevented women from acquiring the necessary skills to enter high-technology firms and benefit from better employment opportunities. From the mid-1980s onward, the third stage of the export-led strategy was characterized by the relocation of labour-intensive firms from Taiwan Province of China to countries with lower labour costs. This dismantled most labour-intensive manufacturing production in the economy, and women suffered the most from the layoffs. The decrease in female labour demand resulted in a steady decline of women's share of employment and a widening of the gender wage gap.

In sum, between the 1960s until the 1990s, Taiwan Province of China was one of the most successful practitioners of the export-led growth strategy. Industrial policies were geared towards promoting domestic firms' export growth relying on cheap labour to keep export prices low. Despite the increase in female employment, women's wages remained low relative to the wages of their male counterparts. This was mainly due to a surplus in the female labour supply and to the crowding of women in lower-productivity sectors. At the same time, only limited attempts were made to pay women higher wages or to enable them to enter higher-skilled jobs. Literature suggests that Taiwan Province of China relied on low-wage female workers to achieve competitive advantage in labour-intensive manufacturing production in international markets. From the mid-1980s onward, when industry in Taiwan Province of China upgraded and relocated, a defeminization of labour ensued.

Since then, increases in women's education levels at the end of the last century, the passage of the Gender Equality in Employment Law in 2001, and changing societal views about gender roles have contributed to an improvement over time in terms of gender equality outcomes in Taiwan Province of China. As a result of increasing education levels and awareness of financial independence among women, the overall labor participation rate of women aged 15 and above in Taiwan was over 50 per cent in 2012, and reached 51.4 per cent in 2019.

Sources: Berik (2008); Chu (2002); Government of Taiwan Province of China (2021); Yang (2016)

Why do women wage workers dominate the pool of low-wage and flexible labour in developing countries? The gender education gap has contributed to this outcome in the earlier stages of trade liberalization. However, that gap has closed almost entirely at the primary level, and it has been narrowing at higher levels in many developing countries over time. In fact, in some developing regions, such as Latin America and parts of South-East Asia, women's educational achievement has even exceeded that of men at secondary and tertiary levels. However, women may lack on-the-job training and access to technical and *vocational training* programmes, which might limit their participation in high-skilled positions.

As has been seen, women wage workers as a source of low-wage and flexible labour force have been instrumental in helping developing countries achieve competitive advantage. Is such a strategy based on gender inequality sustainable in the long run? The answer is no for several reasons. First, gender inequalities may hinder economic growth, for example, through adverse effects on labour productivity (e.g. due to gender gaps in health and education), through misallocation of talent, and through adverse effects on human capital investments (Klasen and Santos Silva, 2018; Seguino, 2020). Second, if this strategy is adopted by all countries, it may adversely impact their *terms of trade* vis-à-vis capital-intensive exporting countries (Cagatay, 2001). Thus, higher gender wage differentials lead to lower export prices relative to that of imports (Osterreich, 2007).

Third, reliance on gender inequality as an export strategy is problematic from an ethical perspective. Such competition may lead to a race to the bottom and worsen inequality and living standards in these countries. Such adverse effects have led to pressure from consumers in destination markets who pay attention to labour standards and refuse to buy goods that are produced under precarious working conditions such as low wages, long working hours, and gender discrimination and harassment in the workplace. At the international level, the ILO conventions on equal remuneration and discrimination, and human rights treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, provide a legal basis for decent work and gender equality in the labour market. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are increasingly focusing on gender-

related issues as well (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2019a). At the regional and national levels, some countries and regional associations also legislate to require companies to better ensure that labour rights are respected throughout their value chains.

In conclusion, a strategy that is de facto based on gender inequality, although aimed at spurring growth and development, is neither desirable nor sustainable. The evolution of social norms and traditions in parallel with economic development is bound to make gender inequalities increasingly unacceptable over time. Inequalities may then become a source of social conflict and destabilize the social and economic environment in the countries concerned.

Questions for discussion

- What data can you find about the wages, quality and type of employment of women in different manufacturing sectors in your country? How have these factors evolved?
- What types of policies would you recommend to governments to overcome women's segregation into low-paid and low-skilled sectors?

2.2.2. WOMEN TEMPORARY MIGRANT WORKERS

Most countries in the world are affected by migration as country of origin or country of destination. Migration is driven by asymmetries in the availability of labour and capital around the globe (Panizzon, 2010). According to ILO (2021) estimates, there were 169 million migrant workers worldwide in 2019, corresponding to 4.9 per cent of the labour force in destination countries globally. Women constitute 41.5 per cent of international migrant workers. Among women migrant workers, 79.9 per cent work in services, 14.2 per cent in industry, and 5.9 per cent in agriculture. Women have a relatively higher share of services than men in employment, mainly explained by the global rise in labour demand in the care economy. More than two-thirds of international migrant workers are concentrated in high-income countries. The top recipient subregions of the world are Northern, Southern and Western Europe (24.2 per cent), North America (22.1 per cent) and Arab States (14.3 per cent) (ILO, 2021).

Migrant workers contribute to both countries of origin and countries of destination. In the former group

of countries, remittances help reduce poverty and promote development. When migrant workers return to their home country, they bring experience, savings, professional networks and, in some cases, increased education. These benefits are potentially more significant for women than men. In the host countries, migrant workers contribute to economic growth, and in the case of women low-skilled migrant workers, they fill low-paid domestic and care jobs that are not taken by native women citizens (ILO, 2009; Lassman and Mulder, 2021).

Multilateral instruments that deal with employment-related migration include the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; ILO conventions promoting decent work and labour migration;²¹ and the GATS of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The GATS is a trade agreement that is not meant to regulate migration, but rather to progressively liberalize the temporary movement of certain categories of services suppliers who provide services in another WTO member. Permanent or long-term migration does not fall within the scope of GATS Mode 4 of services supply (movement of natural persons). Mode 4 coverage is quite limited and provides a right of entry and stay in another WTO member only to selected categories of

services suppliers, in particular to those connected with the establishment of a commercial presence (e.g. intra-corporate transferees) and higher-skilled individuals, such as managers and executives. Measures regarding citizenship, residence or employment or the search for employment on a permanent basis are excluded from the scope of Mode 4. Conversely, the temporary movement of services suppliers is covered by Mode 4. However, neither the text of GATS nor its Annex on the Temporary Movement of Natural Persons define the duration of stay.

Women make up the majority of temporary migrant workers in domestic and healthcare services sectors. They hold a significant share of precarious, insecure and informal employment without social protection, and are paid less than local workers and male migrant workers on average. Countries in Asia and the Pacific as well as Latin America are a major source of the global temporary migrant workforce in domestic and healthcare services. The Philippines is one of the main countries of origin. Box 13 illustrates the challenges faced by Filipino women migrant workers abroad.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had gendered effects on temporary migrant workers. Unemployment has increased more among migrant than non-migrant workers during the pandemic. The adverse effects of the pandemic have been more severe among women temporary migrant workers than men because of their concentration in the

Box 13. Women migrant workers from the Philippines

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas estimates that 10.2 million Filipino men and women have migrated for work to over 200 countries since 2013. Around 4.9 million of them have settled permanently in their countries of destination, including (in decreasing order) the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, United Kingdom, Italy, Singapore, Germany, Spain and New Zealand. Some 1.2 million Filipino migrant workers are undocumented migrants in countries like Malaysia, the United States and Italy. Remittances of migrant workers account for 10 per cent of GDP in the Philippines and are a key driver of the economy.

Filipino women account for 56 per cent of the 2 million overseas Filipino workers whose contracts were processed by the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration in 2019. These numbers do not cover thousands of women who migrated through irregular channels, for example, by entering third countries as tourists but remaining there as non-registered immigrants. Around 40 per cent of newly deployed migrant women workers were employed in elementary occupations such as domestic work, according to a survey carried out by the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2019. Saudi Arabia, followed by the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan Province of China, and Kuwait were the top destinations for Filipino temporary women migrant workers. Many of these women, especially those who are undocumented, suffer from sexual and physical violence and extreme working conditions, as documented by anecdotal evidence.

Besides the largely unskilled pool of domestic migrant workers, skilled Filipino women also migrate abroad. They include trained doctors and nurses who work in hospitals and care institutions abroad. In 2019, 17,000 nurses signed overseas contracts.

Source: Kotte (2021).

²¹ These are the Migration for Employment Convention of 1949 (No. 97), Migrant Workers Convention of 1975 (No. 143), Equality of Treatment Convention of 1962 (No. 118), and Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers of 2011 (No. 189).

domestic services sector and higher presence in informal or unstable forms of employment. Due to fear among their household employers of possible transmission of COVID-19, many migrant domestic workers have been dismissed, and those who managed to keep their job had to limit their outside contact due to fears of contamination (ILO, 2021). Those dismissed were unable to find new work or go back to their country of origin due to border closings. Most migrant domestic workers hold live-in positions, resulting in a loss of accommodation following dismissal. Also, in some countries, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, work permits are tied to a specific employer, putting the legal status of workers at risk (Foley and Piper, 2020).

Legal steps have been taken to address the adverse working conditions of domestic workers. In 2011, the ILO issued the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189), which entered into force in 2013. This convention recognized for the first time that domestic work is not a private or family matter and is work like any other. It calls for providing domestic workers with the same basic protections as other workers. However, only 35 countries had ratified the convention as of August 2022. In terms of migration policy at the national level, countries need to develop policy frameworks not only on outward migration but also on returning migrants. Box 14 presents the case of Cambodia with respect to migration policy at the national level.

Box 14. How to govern outward and returning migration through national policies: The case of Cambodia

There has been an increase in outflow migration from Cambodia over the last two decades resulting from both better employment opportunities abroad and closer bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries. More than 1 million Cambodians worked abroad in 2020, and women constituted around half of them. Thailand and Malaysia are the top destinations, but Singapore and Saudi Arabia have also become important destinations over time. Migrant workers contribute to the Cambodian economy by both sending remittances home and enriching the labour market with skills picked up from abroad. Migrant women from Cambodia mostly work in households, garment factories, agriculture and restaurants. They have low levels of education and earn less than migrant men on average while working abroad. They are also prone to physical, health and sexual abuse more than men throughout their migration journey.

Cambodia started developing policies for a safe and orderly migration system in 2010. The policy framework focuses on enhanced labour migration governance, expanded social protection coverage and better access to financial services for migrants. Most of the existing initiatives, however, focus on outward migration and issues such as irregular recruitment and exploitation or social adaptation of workers overseas, and less on the return aspect. Tracking or harnessing human capital development of migrant workers abroad or helping them build new skills while working abroad are not part of these policy interventions.

As of March 2022, there was no formal reintegration framework in Cambodia, and the situation was similar in other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Introducing an effective reintegration framework is necessary to secure a dignified return of migrant workers, provide them with a smooth transition into their local settings, and enable them to explore economic opportunities. The reintegration framework should incorporate not only economic reintegration but also health and psychosocial dimensions, which are especially important for women migrants. Some of the possible policy interventions for the return aspect include:

- Strengthening social protection coverage for migrant women
- Improving data collection on migrant women
- Providing training while migrants are abroad
- Facilitating the acquisition of necessary skills to secure jobs or manage businesses when migrants return
- Easing the procedures to set up a business for returning migrants
- Providing financial and digital education to returning migrants
- Enhancing access to capital by returning migrants

These policies need to be implemented through a gender lens because some of these challenges, such as limited access to capital, barriers to establishing a business, or low levels of skills, are more pressing for women migrants than men in general. Finally, a clearer assessment of returning migrant women's current skills, literacy and digital connectivity status could be useful for designing suitable intervention measures.

Source: IOM (2022).

2.3. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

This section first looks at how various forms of gender inequalities affect women business owners' participation in international trade and their competitiveness. It then examines the implications of gender inequalities for women's participation in *informal cross-border trade*.

2.3.1 WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

Module 1 showed that women as entrepreneurs benefit from trade openness through expanded export markets and integration into GVCs. However, various supply-side constraints that reduce productivity prevent MSMEs, especially those owned by women, from fully benefiting from these opportunities (World Bank and WTO, 2020).

Trade-related capacity-building programmes can help lower the barriers faced by entrepreneurs in tradable sectors. For example, contractual/institutional arrangements could be set up to secure *market access* for processed products by small entrepreneurs, with a focus on women-owned businesses. Access to credit could be eased through mechanisms such as government-guaranteed lending and structured supply-chain finance schemes to support small business owners, with a specific window for women. Public procurement opportunities could be geared to women-owned MSMEs. Skill development programmes could target areas where there is a need to support the capacity of women entrepreneurs to export in key export sectors of a country.

Sub-Saharan Africa stands out as the only region in the world where women are more likely to be entrepreneurs than men. It is also the region with the lowest share of entrepreneurs who start a business to pursue an opportunity. Hence, entrepreneurship is driven mainly by economic necessity in the absence of opportunities for wage employment. Almost 50 per cent of women in the non-agricultural sector are entrepreneurs in sub-Saharan Africa, and they face constraints similar to those faced by women entrepreneurs in other places. For example, according to data for 14 countries from the region, women entrepreneurs cluster in low-profit sectors such as retail and hospitality, and have less business capital (e.g. equipment, inventory, property) and fewer employees than men entrepreneurs. There are also gender gaps in firm capabilities. For example, men entrepreneurs are more likely to adopt advanced business practices than women entrepreneurs, who tend to cluster in the informal economy. In addition to unequal access to education, skill development and finance, women entrepreneurs face the risks of gender-based discrimination and violence, unequal household allocation of productive resources, and time constraints due to care obligations. Finally, social norms hinder the business performance of women entrepreneurs in Africa. These gender-based norms shape how women view themselves and perceive their abilities, affect their aspirations, and can cause discriminatory treatment by others. Box 15 presents an overview of policy solutions that could help address some of these gendered constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in sub-Saharan Africa.

Box 15. What policies have worked to support women entrepreneurs in sub-Saharan Africa?

World Bank (2019) reviews the findings from rigorous impact evaluations and classifies policy strategies to advance opportunities for women entrepreneurs based on the strength of the evidence. These strategies are typically based on a set of countries and therefore difficult to generalize. However, it is still useful to highlight the most promising ones for policymakers. The top three strategies identified are as follows:

- Conduct training programmes that apply lessons from psychology to encourage women to act with an entrepreneurial mindset. Evidence from Togo, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Kenya show that such programmes strengthen the socio-economic skills of women entrepreneurs and have more of a positive impact on their business performance than standard managerial training programmes.
- Support women with secure savings mechanisms. Providing women with mechanisms to set aside money for their business enables them to insulate these funds from household demands. Evidence from Kenya, Uganda and Malawi shows that targeted policies to increase access to business bank accounts, mobile money and other digital payments have a positive effect on the business performance of women entrepreneurs.
- Provide large cash grants to women-owned businesses as part of business plan competitions. Such competitions can be a remedy to the capital constraints of growth-oriented firms, including those owned by women. Evidence from Nigeria, Ethiopia, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia show that large cash grants provided through business plan competitions had a positive effect on employment, sales and profits of women entrepreneurs.

Other strategies with strong potential, identified based on existing evidence, include removing legal constraints to gender equality; strengthening land tenure rights for women; expanding access of women entrepreneurs to new business networks; offering women-friendly training designs, including peer support; providing in-kind grants to female-owned firms; introducing financial innovations that lower collateral requirements, including psychometric scoring; facilitating access to childcare services; engaging men to provide a more supportive environment for female entrepreneurs; and incentivizing women to cross over to male-dominated sectors, for example, through information-sharing, apprenticeship programmes and male role models.

Finally, it should be noted that women entrepreneurs are often affected by several constraints and therefore may need policy interventions targeting multiple areas, and that most of these policy interventions are also sound for men entrepreneurs.

Source: World Bank (2019).

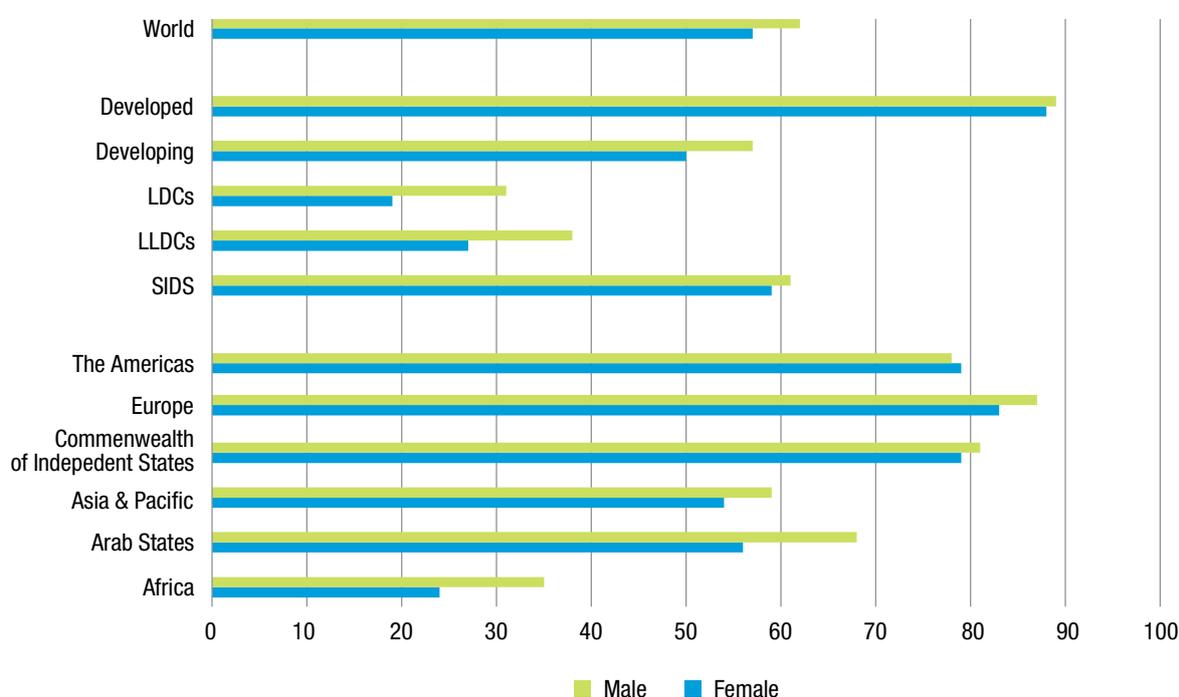
The implications of digitalization for women business owners

Digital transformation is the integration of digital technology into various fields of a business, and it has become important in the context of international trade over time. It reduces the cost of engaging in international trade, facilitates the coordination of GVCs, supports the diffusion of ideas and technologies, and connects more businesses to consumers around the world (OECD, 2019a; UNCTAD, 2022a). Besides the Internet serving as the hub for e-commerce and enabling other online exchanges and transactions, digital technologies are also important with respect to

exports of ICT and digitally transmitted services, which have grown more rapidly than services (WTO, 2021; UNCTAD, 2022b).

The world, however, is still divided in terms of Internet connectivity, and there is a digital gender divide in developing countries. According to ITU (2021) estimates, 2.9 billion people (37 per cent of the world's population) had still never used the Internet in 2020, and 96 per cent of these people live in developing countries. The digital gender divide is closing globally and has been eliminated in developed countries, but large gaps persist, especially in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and in Africa and Arab states (figure 13).

Figure 13. Percentage of the female and male population using the Internet, 2020



Source: ITU (2021).

Note: LDCs: least developed countries; LLDCs: landlocked developing countries; SIDS: small island developing states.

E-commerce refers to digitally ordered, digitally delivered or digital-platform-enabled transactions (figure 14). In 2021, global retail e-commerce sales reached US\$4.9 trillion, a 16.3 per cent increase from 2020. Cross-border e-commerce accounts for about 20 per cent of global e-commerce. In 2021, 52 per cent of online shoppers

purchased from global and domestic websites. On the other side of such transactions, online sellers affirm that cross-border sales helped their business to grow. China takes the largest portion of cross-border e-commerce trade, with a predicted share of 41 per cent of the total in 2021 (IATF, 2022).

Figure 14. What e-commerce means for businesses, consumers and markets



Source: IFC (2021).

Box 16. Opportunities and challenges of e-commerce for women entrepreneurs

E-commerce has become an important outlet for women entrepreneurs to access markets for several reasons. E-commerce demands a lower level of investment than regular trade, as it does not require a physical setting to reach customers. It allows for working from home and flexible time management through part-time work and flexible working hours. This is important for women who often combine paid work with unpaid household responsibilities, and who may need to supplement other sources of income. E-commerce also makes it possible to bypass cultural and mobility barriers that are significant for women, as the web can provide a certain degree of anonymity and help avoid gender bias that may be present in traditional market settings. An additional benefit for women-owned businesses is that they can leverage e-commerce to enter sectors where they are usually underrepresented, such as electronics. This could contribute to closing earning gaps in the medium to long run.

It is necessary to take steps to narrow the digital gender divide in developing countries and to increase digital literacy for small entrepreneurs to take advantage of e-commerce business opportunities. An effective regulatory framework is needed to manage digital developments and data flows. Training programmes on digital literacy and e-commerce activities need to be expanded, and current education and skill development programmes need to be redesigned to align with digital transformations. A digital trade policy is also needed to allow inflows of information and communications technology products, services and expertise to developing countries.

In terms of gender-focused capacity-building interventions, the UNCTAD-led eTrade4Women Programme provides a good example. There are also corporate-led initiatives to lower the digital gender divide in developing countries such as the “She will Connect” Programme of Intel, the global microprocessor company. Access to finance is another issue that needs attention because, as is the case for offline activities, women entrepreneurs selling online are less likely than men to access financing in support of their business and are not always aware of financing options available to them. Legal obstacles continue to impede women from starting or expanding their businesses in some countries, as when women are not able to register a business or open a bank account in the same way as men. Another issue that needs to be addressed is online harassment, which is more severe for women and young people than men and older people. Even though such harassment is mostly sexist and political, some of it can be for professional reasons, too, and needs to be addressed in the context of women entrepreneurship.

Sources: Smeets (2021), Korinek et al. (2021), IFC (2021) and UNCTAD eTrade4Women Programme (<https://unctad.org/topic/e-commerce-and-digital-economy/etrade-for-women>)

According to World Bank and WTO (2020), the share of women entrepreneurs is higher in e-commerce platforms than in offline businesses. Areas of e-commerce activity include cosmetics, clothing, grocery and baby products. Box 16 presents an overview of e-commerce opportunities and challenges for women entrepreneurs and points to some possible policies to address the challenges.

Questions for discussion

- What do you think are the main constraints that hinder the capacity of women entrepreneurs to export? Do they require trade-focused policies or domestic policies or both?

- What do you think are the main obstacles to women entrepreneurs’ use of digital transformations in developing countries?

2.3.2. WOMEN INFORMAL CROSS-BORDER TRADERS

Women are present in cross-border trade in large numbers in many regions and they often operate informally. Informal cross-border trade refers to trade in legitimately produced goods and services that escape the regulatory framework established by the government (i.e. avoiding certain taxes and regulatory rules).²² It constitutes a vital source of employment and livelihoods for low-income and low-skilled women and youth in border districts. In that respect, it has broad ramifications for poverty and development.

²² These goods and services may be traded by (i) informal (unregistered) traders operating entirely outside the formal economy and passing through unofficial routes, or by (ii) formal (registered) traders who fully or partially evade trade-related regulations and duties (UNCTAD, 2019a).

Women trade a wide range of agricultural products (e.g. fruits, vegetables, fish, cereals) and manufactured products (e.g. new and second-hand clothes and shoes, kitchen tools, blankets, bed sheets). In that sense, such trade also contributes to food security (UNCTAD, 2019a).

Women informal cross-border traders face both supply-side and border obstacles to a greater extent than men. In terms of supply-side constraints, societal gender norms often limit women's ability to run a business and control their income. Access to finance, markets, information and transportation, sufficient education, and adequate technical and managerial skills are other obstacles especially faced by women traders. Women's higher unpaid work burden also constrains their trade performance because time is a critical factor in crossing the border and clearing customs. Finally, a conducive

business regulatory environment is a major factor relevant to the success of cross-border traders.

In terms of border obstacles, inadequate border infrastructure, such as lack of warehousing and sanitary facilities and border facilities (e.g. banking, accommodation, information desks, security measures) is a major constraint for small-scale traders, especially for women. At border crossings, women traders are more prone to be subject to corruption and sometimes need to pay bribes to circumvent legal procedures as they often lack the necessary information and skills to complete these procedures on their own.

UNCTAD (2019b) provides a framework for policy advocacy to address these constraints and support women informal cross-border traders, as illustrated in table 4 .

Table 4. Policy recommendations to support women informal cross-border traders

- Training and awareness-raising on trade issues
 - Dissemination of information on simplified trade regimes (STRs)¹
 - Strengthening the presence of Trade Information Desks Officers
 - Capacity-building on entrepreneurship
- Simplified trade regimes and their uptake
 - Streamlining the implementation of STRs
 - Expanding the list of eligible products
 - Raising the threshold for STR transactions
- Transparency and sensitization
 - Improving transparency on fees, duties and documentation requirements
 - Increasing gender sensitivity of customs officials through training
 - Promoting gender parity among border officers
- Facilitation of the business environment and formalization
 - Relaxing registration requirements and incentivizing formalization
 - Sourcing from women-owned businesses
 - Forming linkages with local value chains
- Improved dialogue among stakeholders
 - Strengthening communication between informal cross-border traders and border officials
 - Strengthening cross-border trader associations
 - Involving cross-border trader associations in policy dialogue

- Access to finance and infrastructure development
 - Supporting small-scale traders' access to credit
 - Building sanitation and sleeping facilities at border crossings
 - Ensuring safe currency exchange transactions at the borders
- Policy coordination
 - Harmonizing the characteristics of STRs
 - Establishing one-stop windows and fast-track clearance systems
- Involvement of women's organizations
 - Supporting cooperatives and networks of women's organizations
 - Providing training to cooperative personnel on basic business skills
 - Linking women's organizations to distribution networks and facilitating cooperative access to credit

Source: UNCTAD (2019b).

¹ STRs refer to the simplification of the trade and customs procedures for small cross-border trade consignments. STRs are also meant to encourage small-scale traders to formalize their business.

The COVID-19 pandemic directly impacted cross-border traders due to border closings, lockdowns, social distancing measures, supply chain disruptions, a decreasing number of customers, and an increase in business operation and travel costs due to the need to comply with new health requirements (UNCTAD, 2022a). Many traders could not keep their businesses going. At the same time, informal border crossings have increased during the pandemic to avoid COVID-19-related border formalities, and this increased traders' exposure to various risks. Those traders who managed to survive resorted to several alternatives to cope with the restrictions resulting from the pandemic. Some started sourcing their products locally, others used transport company services, and yet others started growing the products that they trade to make their business viable. Some traders took a further step and started using social media platforms to continue their businesses. They also established networks through these tools to advertise their products, and to buy and sell products online, including through online payments (Zarrilli, 2021; UNCTAD, 2022c).

Questions for discussion

- What are the supply-side constraints that inhibit the activities of women cross-border traders?

- Identify three major obstacles faced by women at borders. What policies would you recommend as a solution to these border obstacles if you were a policymaker?

2.4. CONCLUSION: MODULE 2

Module 2 has shown that women wage workers have contributed to achieving a competitive advantage in international markets for developing countries, and discussed why an export strategy based on cheap female labour is not a viable long-term strategy for both economic growth and ethical reasons.

Women are also central to the global care economy, dominating temporary migrant worker flows in the domestic services sector. Women as entrepreneurs benefit from access to cheaper inputs and technology as well as expanded markets to export goods through trade liberalization. However, the factors that inhibit women's capacity to successfully start and run a business also limit their prospects to export. Domestic policies need to be implemented in coordination with trade policy to support small entrepreneurs' successful participation in international markets. The opportunities arising from digital transformations for small entrepreneurs, such as e-commerce, need to be explored further. Both supply-side and border obstacles more severely experienced by women cross-border traders need to be addressed. In all these domains, gender equality needs to be considered as a cross-cutting issue in policymaking.

3. MODULE 3 – MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN TRADE POLICY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This teaching volume tells a story of hope. Since the start of the second decade of the 2000s, there has been a transformation in how trade policy circles consider gender issues. Those responsible for trade policy have moved from being gender-blind (i.e. not noticing that trade can impact men and women differently) to increasingly recognizing differential impacts and the need to respond to them.

Module 3 examines the ways through which gender considerations have been integrated into and/or mainstreamed in trade policy. It is useful to keep in mind that gender equality is the goal and *gender mainstreaming* is a strategy towards this goal. A range of different actors have a role to play in this endeavour: governmental ministries and agencies, trade negotiators, international organizations, employers, cooperatives, researchers, statisticians, and civil society organizations, among others.

The number of initiatives that aim to mainstream gender into trade has increased over time. They are found within new trade agreements, in the work of international organizations, and at the national level. This module first discusses ex ante gender impact assessments as a way of informing trade policy for gender mainstreaming. The module then examines the developments over time in gender provisions in trade agreements before looking at examples of gender mainstreaming in trade policy through the work of the WTO and through other avenues at the national and regional levels. Finally, the module assesses the extent to which these initiatives contribute to gender equality objectives.

This is a rapidly evolving field, so this module does not aim to provide exhaustive coverage of all gender mainstreaming initiatives in trade policy that have been undertaken or are under way. Rather, the focus will be on some of the main issues at stake, with a view to highlighting best practices and suggesting useful avenues for future work to mainstream gender into trade policy.

After having completed this module, you will be able to:

- Describe different approaches to ex ante gender impact assessment of trade policy
- Compare the ways through which gender provisions are introduced in trade agreements and assess their likely effectiveness
- Assess the developments at the WTO regarding gender mainstreaming in trade policy
- Formulate proposals to make any given country's trade policy more gender responsive.

3.2. EX ANTE GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF TRADE POLICY

Ex ante impact assessments of trade policy are useful for several reasons.²³ They enable a shift in focus away from the aggregate impact of a trade policy on a country as a whole to its impact on specific groups in the society (e.g. rural vs. urban populations, men vs. women). Such assessments provide an estimate of the potential impact of trade policy on these groups, and in this way help identify optimal policy design to achieve specific targets for them. They also contribute to the development and implementation of complementary measures that might be needed to mitigate adverse effects of a planned trade policy or, conversely, to enhance its potential positive effects. Trade policy or trade reforms may be implemented unilaterally and/or through bilateral/multilateral trade agreements.

Gender impact assessments of trade policy serve to gather evidence and broaden knowledge about how trade reforms affect women and men, as well as overall gender equality. The central question of a gender impact assessment is whether the law, policy or measure being assessed reduces, maintains or increases inequalities between women and men. As early as 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action called for gender impact assessments. Its paragraph 165 advises governments to seek to ensure that national policies

²³ Ex post impact assessments are also important to assess trade policy during the implementation process and identify what has and has not worked for future trade policies and amendments to existing ones.

related to trade agreements “do not have an adverse impact on women’s new and traditional economic activities,” and “to use gender-impact analyses in the development of macro and micro-economic and social policies to monitor such impact and restructure policies in cases where harmful impact occurs.”

Assessments of likely gendered impacts of planned trade policies are arguably required under human

rights law. For example, the CEDAW Committee, the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the CEDAW Convention, is one of the many human rights bodies to have affirmed that knowing how trade and trade-related policies affect women is important and that States are required to carry out impact assessments (box 17). In this sense, ex ante impact assessments are also a key tool for accountability in trade policymaking.

Box 17. The obligation to protect women’s rights in trade and investment policy

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee routinely poses questions to State parties about women’s economic empowerment. On occasion it also raises specific concerns about the impact of international trade and investment policies on women. The committee has expressed concern that developed countries do not undertake sufficient impact assessments explicitly considering women’s human rights before they negotiate international trade and investment agreements. For instance, in 2016 and 2017, the committee recommended that Switzerland, Canada, and Germany do so. In 2019, it said that the United Kingdom should ensure that any future trade and investment agreements “explicitly consider their impact on women’s rights.”

The CEDAW Committee also makes recommendations in the context of regional trade integration policies. For example, in 2019, the committee recommended that the Seychelles develop a national policy on the Buenos Aires Joint Declaration on Trade and Women’s Economic Empowerment (see Section 3.4.1 in the main text) in the context of the agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. The committee further advised the Seychelles to ensure that any future trade and investment agreement it negotiates recognizes the primacy of its obligations under CEDAW and explicitly considers the impact of these agreements on women’s rights.

On several occasions, the committee has expressed concern about the lack of data on the impact of trade policies on women. For example, in 2011, it noted Costa Rica’s “lack of concrete information regarding measures taken to analyse, prevent, and follow up the possible negative impact of the Central American Free Trade Agreement for women employed in the formal sector.”²⁴ Similarly, in 2018, the committee expressed concern to the government of The Bahamas about “the limited information available on the new measures for structural adjustments in the development strategies of the State party, trade liberalization policies and their impacts on women.”²⁵ The CEDAW Committee has also noted in 2018 the lack of data on the impact of Samoa’s trade and investment agreements (including its accession to the World Trade Organization) on the rights of women and girls.²⁶

Source: Concluding observations on country periodic reports by CEDAW (for the cited countries).

Some countries or economic blocs do undertake ex ante gender impact assessments while negotiating a trade agreement. These assessments vary in scope and purpose. The sections that follow examine the approaches of Canada and the European Union

that conduct ex-ante gender assessments of trade agreements under negotiations on a regular basis. That is followed by a brief discussion of other examples of such impact assessment methodologies and their limitations, including suggestions to address those shortcomings.

²⁴ <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-CRI-CO-5-6.pdf>, pp 6-7.

²⁵ <https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhsmPYo5NfAsNvhO7uZ-b6iXOQZLyJskNSW%2b8FnZVwrvYdFn86ajQLNSXJ7tgl93IOGgkRTahQzPAi7Yp4z8HJaHJyhZJdSpx0AV1HCRBMhU-Ly5> p. 12.

²⁶ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N18/378/83/PDF/N1837883.pdf?OpenElement>

3.2.1. CANADA'S GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS PLUS

Canada has made gender equality and empowerment of women and girls a priority for its domestic and international policies. To this end, it has developed the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) tool and mandated the integration of GBA+ in all policies and policy proposals, including free trade agreements (FTAs). GBA+ is an analytical tool to examine the potential impact (both intended and unintended) of a policy, plan, programme or initiative on diverse groups of people, considering gender and other identity factors. It goes beyond considerations of sex and gender, and incorporates a range of intersectional identity characteristics, including indigenous heritage, age, education, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, geography, socioeconomic status, family status, sexual orientation and mental or physical disability. The mandatory GBA+ process has been implemented since 2016 as a requirement to seek Cabinet authority to engage in FTA negotiations. For the ongoing (as of August 2022) Canada-Mercosur FTA negotiations, the Canadian government introduced the comprehensive chapter-by-chapter GBA+ process in 2019 to expand the mandatory GBA+ process.

The comprehensive GBA+ process consists of an expanded economic impact assessment, which is conducted by the Office of the Chief Economist at Global Affairs Canada, as well as a chapter-by-chapter analysis of the proposed FTA. This economic analysis includes a newly developed labour market model that takes into account worker characteristics such as gender, age, and workers' distribution across eight occupational categories and 57 sectors of the economy. In this way, the economic model assesses the potential impact of trade liberalization under the proposed FTA on labour, gender and other inclusive trade considerations. The economic analysis is supported by a questionnaire to guide lead negotiators in assessing all the effects – including positive and negative, direct and indirect, and intended and unintended ones – of the provisions on men and women in Canada in their economic roles as workers, entrepreneurs, business owners and consumers.

In the case of the Canada-Mercosur FTA, the GBA+ exercise, which considered women in Canada but not in Mercosur countries, served to inform the negotiations and help identify opportunities for adding new gender-responsive and inclusive trade provisions across the FTA (Government of Canada, 2020).

Through this GBA+, Canada undertook a standalone and thorough ex ante gender impact assessment of a trade agreement. Canada also applied the framework of GBA+ to evaluate the final outcome of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement negotiations to see if the provisions were gender-inclusive.

3.2.2. EUROPEAN UNION SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Over the course of a proposed trade agreement of the European Union, four major types of assessments and evaluations are carried out: an impact assessment at the initial design stage; a sustainability impact assessment (SIA) during the negotiations; an economic assessment of the negotiated outcome after the conclusion of the negotiations and before the signing of the agreement; and finally, an ex-post evaluation after implementation (European Commission, 2016).

SIAs were first developed by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade in 1999 for the WTO Doha Development Agenda negotiations. They provide an in-depth assessment of the potential sustainable economic, social and environmental development impacts of a proposed trade agreement while its negotiation is ongoing. They also make recommendations about accompanying measures to be put in place (if a deal is agreed upon and implemented) to increase positive benefits or mitigate possible negative effects. Since 2012, all SIAs also include an analysis of the potential human rights impact of the trade agreement under negotiation (European Commission, 2016).

SIAs rely on both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis is centred on a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model to simulate the impact of a trade agreement, and case studies accompany it whenever relevant. The qualitative analysis is the result of inputs received in a consultation process with stakeholder representatives of all interested parties in both the European Union and the partner countries (European Commission, 2016).

In November 2020, the European Union also introduced its Gender Action Plan (GAP) III entitled "An Ambitious Vision on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment for EU External Action." The GAP III recognizes that new trade agreements should include strong provisions on gender equality, including compliance with relevant ILO and United Nations

Conventions; compliance with these conventions should also continue to be required under the new Generalized System of Preferences scheme, which will take effect in 2024. The European Union's GAP III states that dedicated gender analyses will continue to be included in all European Union ex ante impact assessments, SIAs, and policy reviews linked to trade. While trade is not directly addressed in the objectives and indicators that frame the implementation of GAP III, various impact indicators are introduced under the thematic area of promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women, which have direct implications for women's participation in trade (European Commission, 2020).

SIAs include analysis of the impact on women and vulnerable groups (e.g. low-income, children, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, unskilled workers, and older or less educated consumers). Gender considerations are introduced in SIAs among the social themes under "equality." Gender equality is evaluated based on gender equality in employment and employment opportunities, education, social protection and social dialogue (European Commission, 2016). Box 18 presents on evaluation of the European Union's SIAs from a gender perspective. Overall, there is a high degree of variation in the way gender considerations are incorporated into various SIAs by the European Union. The box highlights both very good and weak examples of them.

Box 18. Gender considerations in the European Union's sustainability impact assessments

Based on an analysis of 25 sustainability impact assessments (SIAs), Villup (2015) suggests that the gender component in most SIAs seems to be minimal, and that the relevant analysis has limitations. However, some SIAs devote significant attention to gender issues. Such examples of SIAs as of 2015 included the EU-Central America Association Agreement, the European Union's Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with Armenia, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, the EU-Japan FTA and the EU-ASEAN FTA. The impact of trade on women is mostly analysed for sectors where women dominate, including the textile and clothing sectors and the agriculture and food-processing sector.

SIAs have incorporated an analysis of human rights, including women's rights, since 2012. Some identify affected human rights areas in a thorough manner, as in the case of the European Union DCFTAs with Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco and Armenia. Since the level of this analysis been inconsistent, new guidelines that recognize gender equality and non-discrimination as cross-cutting issues were introduced in 2015 for the analysis of human rights effects. While most SIAs conduct an overall impact assessment on women's employment, some SIAs separately analyse job creation impacts and job quality (e.g. income, workers' rights), and some also suggest capacity-building measures. Finally, the vast majority of SIAs focus on the gender impact of trade liberalization in third countries and do not consider the situation inside the European Union. This seems to be a major difference compared to the Canadian GBA+, which focuses mainly on the impact on Canadian women.

This box assesses the European Union's SIAs carried out after 2015, including nine completed and five ongoing assessments as of March 2022, from a gender perspective. Only country- or region-level SIAs are reviewed, not broad ones like the Trade in Services Agreement and the Green Goods Initiative. Most of the SIAs reviewed incorporate a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling framework to estimate the impact of the negotiated trade/investment policy on sectoral output and employment patterns (at times by skill level). These sectoral findings are matched with the female intensity of sectors to discuss the implications for women's employment opportunities, though in varying detail. Examples of SIAs that included such comparisons include the completed assessments for the EU-Japan FTA, the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, the trade pillar modernization of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement, the EU-Indonesia FTA, the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement, and the EU-Australia and EU-New Zealand FTAs, as well as the ongoing assessments for the EU-Eastern and Southern Africa Economic Partnership Agreement, the EU-Chile Association Agreement trade pillar modernization, and the EU-Malaysia and EU-Philippines FTAs. The ongoing SIA for the EU-Angola negotiations in the context of the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement does not incorporate a CGE analysis but discusses the possible implications of trade expansion in certain sectors for women's employment by distinguishing women's economic roles as workers, entrepreneurs, traders and consumers.

Source: UNCTAD secretariat

Among the recent SIAs, the SIA for the EU-Chile Association Agreement trade pillar modernization, which was under negotiation as of October 2022,

stands out as a good example of how gender considerations could be introduced in a more solid way in SIAs (box 19).

Box 19. Sustainability impact assessment of the modernization of trade part of the European Union-Chile Association Agreement

A sustainability impact assessment (SIA) addresses gender considerations in the context of social issues and applies the methodology introduced in UNCTAD's trade and gender toolbox (see section 3.24 in the main text),²⁷ complementing it with elements of the European Institute for Gender Equality Gender impact assessment toolkit. The social analysis of the SIA assesses the impact on employment and wage levels across sectors of economic activity, gender and skills groups (i.e. unskilled and skilled workers); on women in their economic roles as workers, entrepreneurs, traders and consumers; on poverty, inequality and vulnerable groups; on public policies; on rights at work and social dialogue; on job quality and informal employment; and on uptake of Corporate Social Responsibility/Responsible Business Conduct practices, especially in the context of global value chains.

In the case of the EU-Chile Association Agreement, the impact is assessed on both Chilean and European women. According to Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model estimates, women are expected to have employment gains in absolute terms, but an increase in employment is more likely to occur in male-intensive sectors such as agriculture, construction, supply of electricity, gas and water, and fishing in Chile. It should be noted that more nuanced results occur at the subsectoral level. For example, employment gains, though limited, are expected in the fruits, vegetables and nuts sector, which is female-intensive. Model estimates also show small employment losses for unskilled labour in business services and other services, which include wholesale and retail trade and tourism sectors – both of which are important for women. And certain female-intensive sectors (e.g. education, social and healthcare services and domestic services) are not modelled separately.

Employment impacts in the European Union are expected to be much more limited and to occur mainly in male-intensive sectors (e.g. motor vehicles and transport equipment, wood and paper products, machinery, and oil extraction), as in Chile.

The CGE model estimates show that women-led enterprises may benefit because the sectors where they mostly operate (e.g. trade, hotels and restaurants and agriculture) are likely to have an increase, though limited, in output (notably in Chile) and in bilateral trade. The modernized agreement is expected to benefit women traders/exporters, especially in Chile, as a result of an expansion of output and exports in sectors that are important for women-led exporting, including fruits, vegetables and nuts sector, oilseeds, vegetable oils and fats, fish and seafood, and beverages and tobacco.

Despite these positive expectations, the SIA also notes that women own a very small share of export firms and makes recommendations as to how to increase women's participation in exporting activities. The SIA points to different impacts on women as consumers in Chile depending on their income source, household composition, sector of employment, informal status, etc. It also touches on how the agreement would affect social policies, including those relating to care services. The SIA also notes that rules on public procurement in the modernized trade agreement could affect women and makes recommendations as to how these could be positive for women.

Finally, the SIA recommends introducing support measures to increase women's participation in sectors that are likely to benefit most from the modernized agreement. It suggests including gender equality and support for women in the preamble and objectives of the modernized agreement so as to help women seize opportunities that the agreement offers. It calls for mainstreaming gender issues into core trade disciplines such as trade in services, public procurement and investment, and for including clear and measurable targets on women's rights into the trade and gender provisions. The SIA suggests that both parties strengthen collection and analysis of data disaggregated by gender to enable monitoring of impacts of the modernized agreement on women, and calls for increased dialogue on current issues related to gender and trade.

In its Position Paper setting out its response to the SIA, the European Commission does not engage with any of these recommendations²⁸ For example, regarding the SIA's recommendation to include clear and measurable targets on women's rights, the Position Paper reiterates that it had already proposed that the agreement reaffirm the commitment to effectively implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It also says that the SIA did not identify specific challenges for women-led companies or female employees in the core trade disciplines such as trade in services, public procurement, or investment. It goes on to add that it is difficult to design specific provisions in these areas.

Sources: *European Commission and BKP Consulting (2019); European Commission (2020).*

²⁷ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditc2017d1_en.pdf,

²⁸ (https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2020/june/tradoc_158788.pdf).

3.2.3. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Gender equality is an important concept for human rights impact assessments (HRIAs) in the context of the human rights principle of equality and non-discrimination. The United Nations Guiding Principles on HRIAs of trade and investment agreements (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011) recommend analysing the impact of trade and investment agreements on gender equality by referring to the CEDAW. More recently, the United Nations Guiding Principles on HRIAs of economic reforms (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2019b) set out non-discrimination based on gender and substantive gender equality as one of its principles and called for including a comprehensive gender analysis in HRIAs.

Several *ex ante* HRIAs of trade agreements have devoted attention to women's rights. Rather than looking at the relative opportunities of women prior to and after entry into force of a new trade agreement, the human rights approach puts the concepts of non-discrimination and equality front and centre. This leads to an analysis rooted in human rights principles that would consider not only equality between men and women but also between women from different ethnic

groups, religions, income groups or disability statuses. The human rights approach shines a spotlight on the role of the state and emphasizes the importance of participation in trade policymaking as well as in the HRIA process itself. HRIAs require qualitative as well as quantitative methods of inquiry. Indeed, qualitative data are essential for gauging women's choices at the household or firm level that are relevant to the enjoyment of human rights, such as intra-household spending, division of labour, power relations, and agency (Dommen, 2020).

Most notably, human rights require that States take positive action to address inequalities between women and men, and ensure that women can exercise and enjoy their rights. HRIAs generally do not distinguish explicitly between women in their different economic roles, but rather seek to take a holistic approach – for example, examining whether goods or services primarily consumed by women are more or less costly or accessible, and the extent to which can this be balanced against possible losses or gains in other areas such as employment or taxation.

In 2015, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) commissioned an HRIA of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), then under negotiation (box 20).

Box 20. The Human Rights Impact Assessment of the African Continental Free Trade Area

The Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) paid particular attention to women as well as other vulnerable groups. It focused on agriculture, agro-processing and informal cross-border trade. The HRIA methodology was based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Human Rights Impact Assessments of Trade and Investment. Through qualitative and quantitative research, the AfCFTA HRIA identified trade-related interventions that could be harmful for women, and others that could enhance enjoyment of women's rights.

The HRIA addressed intersectionality, paying particular attention to rural women and women in informal cross-border trade, and made recommendations in that regard. For example, it recommended that member states take steps to better accommodate women at border crossings through the AfCFTA. They should also aim to curb the ill-treatment faced by women informal cross-border traders, design provisions to temporarily exclude a specified number of tariff lines from liberalization, and put in place measures to protect vulnerable groups such as food insecure populations, indigenous groups, or cross-border traders. The HRIA also suggested that member states take action to ensure participation of women in national trade and investment negotiating delegations, and ensure that those adversely affected by the AfCFTA are compensated for these effects through adjustment assistance and reskilling programmes that enable them to adapt to new opportunities. Importantly, the HRIA put forward indicators for ongoing monitoring of the AfCFTA as well as suggestions for the area's institutional framework.

Source: UNECA and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2017).

3.2.4. UNCTAD'S TRADE AND GENDER TOOLBOX

In 2017, UNCTAD developed the Trade and Gender Toolbox, which offers a systematic framework to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on women and gender inequalities prior to the implementation of these reforms. The toolbox focuses on the impact of trade reforms on the gender employment gap. It was first applied by UNCTAD to assess how the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the East African Community (EAC) would affect Kenyan women (UNCTAD, 2017c). The toolbox methodology was applied by the European Union in the SIA of the modernization of the trade portion of the EU–Chile Association Agreement²⁹

The Trade and Gender Toolbox uses a stepwise approach to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on women's wellbeing and gender inequalities. It is composed of four components: (i) gendered economic outcomes; (ii) estimation results; (iii) monitoring indicators; and (iv) a Trade and Gender Index. Component 1 describes the prevailing situation regarding gender inequalities and the economic context in the country at stake. It examines women's participation in economic activity and different dimensions of gender inequality through an analysis of both economic data and legal texts. Component 2 estimates the economic impact of a specific trade reform at the sectoral level (e.g. labour demand by sector), based on a CGE model. It then matches these estimates with women's share of employment in each sector (identified in the first component) to identify the sectors where gender employment inequalities are expected to improve or worsen. Component 3 consists of a checklist to guide the design and implementation of accompanying measures to either enhance the positive effects of trade reforms on gender equality or reduce the risk of them exacerbating gender inequalities. It also includes a series of monitoring indicators to follow the evolution of gender inequalities over time, both before and after implementation of the trade reform. Component 4 is a Trade and Gender Index to measure the co-evolution of trade openness and gender inequalities in employment at the sectoral level (UNCTAD, 2017c).

3.2.5. LIMITATIONS OF EX ANTE GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS AND METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The practice of carrying out ex ante gender impact assessments of trade agreements is an evolving field. This is to be welcomed, even if a practice based on a satisfactory global methodology is yet to emerge. One critique of impact assessments carried out so far is that they are often limited to quantitative analysis of the trade agreement's impacts on employment in the formal sector. As trade and gender interact in multiple ways, affecting women in their various economic roles, a complete gender impact assessment of trade policies should also incorporate the expected impacts on production, consumption, public provisioning and other effects. Given the significant role that the informal sector plays in developing countries, the economic analysis should also cover both formal and informal sectors. Moreover, any gender analysis needs to take into consideration unpaid work, which is mostly shouldered by women under the traditional gender division of labour. Hence a desirable ex ante impact assessment of a trade reform should also examine its implications for women's unpaid work burden and its resulting effects on their participation in the paid economy. This latter characteristic is missing in most ex ante gender impact assessments of trade reforms covered in this module.

Even when SIAs have undertaken a detailed gender analysis of trade agreements under negotiations, as in the case of the SIA of the trade modernization part of the EU-Chile Association Agreement, another common shortcoming of gender impact assessments has been revealed: the failure to incorporate the evidence generated by the impact assessment and its recommendations into the design and implementation of the substantive provisions of the trade agreement being assessed.

Another reason why gender impact assessment has not lived up to its promise so far is that subsequent monitoring of the impact of implemented trade agreements on women's empowerment and gender equality has been neglected, thus missing opportunities to generate knowledge along comparable indicators with which to craft better agreements in the future (Brachet and Meijers, 2018; Dommen, 2020).

²⁹ https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2017/july/tradoc_155758.pdf.

Despite these limitations, there is ongoing progress towards improved methodologies for ex ante gender impact assessments of trade reforms, especially to consider the multiple channels through which trade and gender interact. Greater availability of *sex-disaggregated data* on trade and gender linkages would enable a more detailed analysis using existing methodologies, such as the UNCTAD Toolbox. For example, trade-focused measures of gender inequality (e.g. the share of women-led exporting firms by sector, access to export credit by sex, access to trade-related capacity-building programmes by sex) would make it possible to have a more comprehensive picture of women's situation in different economic roles. A more ambitious improvement would be the development of a global gendered CGE modelling framework to directly incorporate gender considerations such as the unpaid work sphere into ex ante impact assessment.

commitment to reduce gender inequalities through trade policies and agreements, and pushes for an inclusive trade agenda (Bahri, 2021a). There was a significant rise in the number of gender provisions in trade agreements around the world from 1990 to 2001, followed by a slight increase by 2015. Since 2016, there has been a rapid surge again in the number of trade agreements that incorporate gender considerations (Monteiro, 2021).

In addition to the increase in the number of gender provisions in trade agreements, the level of detail in such provisions has also expanded over time. There is no single approach to gender-related wording and provisions, but it is still possible to broadly define five different ways to mainstream gender into trade agreements (Bahri, 2021a): (i) inclusion of standalone chapters, subsequent recommendations, or dedicated arrangements, (ii) inclusion of gender-explicit reservations, waivers, or legal standards, (iii) inclusion in cross-cutting provisions, (iv) inclusion in the agreement's preamble or objectives clause, and (v) inclusion of cooperation-based affirmations or reaffirmations.

The content and scope of gender provisions are of course much more relevant than how many times gender-related words are mentioned in a specific agreement. However, the number of times gender-related words are mentioned does provide an explicit initial indication of whether and to what extent gender concerns are included in each trade agreement. At the global level, more than 20 per cent of trade agreements have an explicit provision relating to gender equality.^{30,31} There are significant differences across the world in this regard. The European Union has the lead with as many as 78 per cent of its trade agreements containing at least one gender-explicit provision.³² It is followed by North American countries (38 per cent),³³ African

Questions for Discussion

- Is your country currently engaged in negotiations for a new trade agreement? If so, has any prior gender assessment been carried out?
- How would you go about undertaking an ex ante gender impact assessment for a trade agreement that your country has negotiated or is negotiating? Please explain how you would decide which sector(s) it would focus on and which of women's economic roles it would primarily analyse.

3.3. GENDER PROVISIONS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS

Gender mainstreaming in trade agreements means the inclusion of gender considerations in the drafting and implementation of them. It affirms a country's

³⁰ These figures are based on Bahri (2021a), who assesses the incorporation of gender considerations into all trade agreements that were in force and notified to the WTO as of 15 June 2021. The study excludes the agreements or economic integration mechanisms not yet notified to the WTO or not yet in force.

³¹ Gender-explicit provisions refer to those provisions that use terms directly related to "gender," "women," "female," "maternity" or a similar expression in an explicit manner. Gender-implicit provisions are those that indirectly address gender issues through areas such as, but not limited to, human rights, a focus on vulnerable groups, labour discrimination, corporate social responsibility, intellectual property rights and small and medium-sized enterprises. Monteiro (2021) finds that more than half of the trade agreements in force and notified to the WTO as of December 2020 had at least one gender-implicit provision. The right to equal treatment and non-discrimination based on sex is the most common among them.

³² They cover equality, non-discrimination, education, skill development, health and safety, and maternal care, and are comprised of a mix of binding and non-binding commitments.

³³ They cover labour concerns, resource access, markets and technology, and participation in economic growth, and are mostly non-binding commitments.

countries (32 per cent),³⁴ South American countries (20 per cent),³⁵ and countries in Asia Pacific (14 per cent).³⁶

Gender provisions in trade agreements differ with respect to their location in the text, the nature, content, and coverage of the provisions, and the language used. These provisions can be found in the preamble, stand-alone chapters, side agreements, specific provisions, cross-cutting provisions or chapters, protocols, declarations, arrangements or even annexes of a trade agreement (Monteiro, 2021). The areas covered in gender provisions range from purely economic ones such as women's employment status and entrepreneurship, to other areas such as education and training, women's representation in decision-making roles, and social and healthcare concerns. The language used can also vary widely and take different forms, including general statements of intent, affirmations to act, reaffirmations to other international instruments, undertakings and objectives, and reservations and waivers (Bahri, 2021a).

Being legally binding is an important issue in terms of the enforcement of these provisions. In most trade agreements, gender provisions are non-binding, drafted with non-mandatory verbs, and use soft language. Gender provisions become enforceable when they fall within the realm of the dispute settlement mechanism of an agreement or when they are not explicitly excluded from the dispute settlement mechanism.³⁷ However, most gender provisions are placed in cooperation chapters, which are excluded from the dispute settlement mechanism in most agreements (Bahri, 2021a). Instead, the parties are called on to make efforts to resolve any issues through dialogue and consultations. It is also the case that most gender provisions are quite soft in the sense that there is little scope for any disputes to arise. As highlighted by Bahri (2021a), being legally binding is not necessarily related to the coverage of gender provisions in a trade agreement. There are agreements that include an entire chapter with several provisions on

trade and gender, but no compulsory and enforceable obligations. There are also some agreements with a single gender provision that creates a legally binding obligation.

The inclusion of gender chapters in trade agreements has significantly increased the visibility and recognition of gender issues in trade policymaking. Despite not being the first trade agreement to include a gender chapter, the 2016 Chile-Uruguay FTA is the first example of a trade agreement with a "new generation" gender chapter.³⁸ It includes detailed provisions on domestic policies, international agreements, cooperation activities and institutional arrangements, including the creation of a trade and gender committee and consultation procedures. The gender chapter in the Chile-Uruguay FTA provided a basis for similar chapters in the trade agreements that Chile signed with Argentina in 2017, with Brazil in 2018 and with Ecuador in 2020, as well as for the trade agreement between the United Kingdom and Japan in 2020 and the amended trade agreements negotiated by Canada with Chile and Israel, both in 2019 (Monteiro, 2021; Bahri, 2021a).

The United Kingdom signed an FTA that includes a chapter on trade and gender with New Zealand on 28 February 2022. The gender chapter complements several gender provisions across other chapters of the agreement, for example in areas such as services, small and medium-sized enterprises, financial services, government procurement, labour, and digital trade. Both countries have agreed to cooperate to support women as workers, business owners and entrepreneurs in areas such as access to markets, business and leadership networks, and finance so that they fully benefit from the agreement. The United Kingdom and New Zealand have committed to develop a framework for analysis of sex-disaggregated data and for gender-focused analysis of trade policies.

Recent bilateral European Union trade agreements also include trade and sustainable development

³⁴ They cover access to resources, entrepreneurship, and representation in decision-making positions, and are a mix of binding and non-binding commitments.

³⁵ They cover labour, market access, resource access, women's role in growth and development, and childcare, and are mostly non-binding commitments.

³⁶ They cover healthcare, nutrition, childcare, maternity, and women's safety, and are mostly binding commitments.

³⁷ See Article N bis-06: Non-application of Dispute Resolution in the Canada-Chile FTA as an example of explicit exclusion.

³⁸ Earlier, the treaties establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) and the Revised Treaty Establishing the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) all included a standalone chapter on women.

chapters that recommend that the parties comply with international standards on labour rights, including some relevant for women, such as the ILO Conventions on equal remuneration and discrimination. Trade and sustainable development chapters provide for dialogue and cooperation between the parties in joint bodies, sometimes with the involvement of civil society. However, most trade and sustainable development chapters in European Union trade agreements have been excluded from the general dispute settlement mechanism and no sanctions can be imposed (European Parliament, 2019).

Two major features of gender chapters in trade agreements are worth highlighting in comparison to mere gender provisions (Korinek et al., 2021): (i) the level of detail devoted to cooperation activities and capacity-building; and (ii) the institutionalization of monitoring activities through the creation of a Trade and Gender Committee. Cooperation activities consider women in different economic roles and focus on women's capacity-building and skill enhancement. Box 21 presents the case of the gender chapter of the Argentina-Chile FTA and the activities of the Trade and Gender Committee.

Box 21. Implementation of the gender chapter of the Argentina-Chile free trade agreement

The first formal meeting of the Trade and Gender Committee was held in Santiago de Chile in October 2019, just a few months after the entry into force of the Argentina-Chile Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which shows the commitment of both countries to the issue. The formal meeting was followed by an initiative for the exchange of experiences between women traders from the two countries.

Despite logistical difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the first meeting of the Administrative Commission of the Agreement was held in August 2020 to discuss implementation of the agreement. On that occasion, the 2021–2022 Work Plan of the Trade and Gender Committee was approved. The plan includes two types of actions: exchange of experiences between public institutions, and joint dissemination of information and training targeting women willing to engage in bilateral trade.

In a noteworthy development, the work plan highlights the possibility of working in a cross-cutting manner across all chapters of the agreement, which could generate synergies among the focal points of each chapter. This in turn could facilitate the incorporation of a gender perspective in implementation of the entire agreement.

Regarding the involvement of the private sector, the first activity of the work plan was a webinar entitled “Women and International Trade: Boosting Trade between Argentina and Chile,” which was a training session for businesswomen from both countries. The purpose was to disseminate information on the agreement and on the trade opportunities that it opens in both markets, including by presenting specific tools that each country had put in place for businesswomen interested in trade. The initiative included the sharing of experiences among women who had already been successfully involved in bilateral trade.

In addition to the visibility given to trade and gender issues by including a specific chapter devoted to them in the agreement, and to the results that are expected from the cooperation between the countries, additional positive developments have already emerged. In the case of Argentina, the resolve to incorporate a gender chapter in the FTA with Chile played an important role as a trigger for the development of a trade and gender agenda at the domestic level, in particular within the Ministry of Foreign Relations. It increased the level of awareness on the issue and created synergies between the areas of trade negotiations and trade promotion.

Sources: Rinaudo (2021); Otero (2021).

Besides bilateral trade agreements, there are also region-wide initiatives geared towards gender mainstreaming in trade policy. For example, in 2018, the European Parliament passed a resolution, subsequently endorsed by the European Commission, to include gender equality considerations in all future European Union trade agreements. Similarly, in the same year, the parties to the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the European Union adopted the CETA Trade and Gender Recommendation, which recognizes the importance of gender-responsive trade policies and the need for cooperation activities to support women's participation in international trade. In 2019, Canada, Chile and New Zealand signed the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTGA), through which they aim to share best practices and promote gender equality, including in international organizations such as the WTO (Bahri, 2021b). Mexico joined the GTGA in 2021.

Among the trade agreements with a gender chapter, as of March 2022 the amended FTA between Canada and Israel is the only one that specifies that any matter arising under the gender chapter can be submitted to the agreement's dispute settlement mechanism if it cannot be resolved through dialogue, consultations or cooperation (Monteiro, 2021). However, the jurisdiction of this mechanism becomes non-compulsory in practice because it is subject to the countries' consent. Even if a dispute can be decided by a panel that can issue a legally binding decision as to whether the measure in question violates the terms of the agreement's trade and gender chapter, it is unlikely that a responding country whose measure is challenged will agree to the binding jurisdiction of a panel (Bahri, 2021b).

Finally, beyond the inclusion of gender-specific provisions or even chapters, trade policies also have gender implications through supposedly gender-neutral provisions in economic areas in which women play an active role or where cultural and legal barriers or regulatory inefficiencies affect women more than men. Provisions on small and medium-sized enterprises, the apparel and textile sector, and informal economic activities, as well as provisions on tariff and non-tariff trade barriers in key sectors for women's employment, are among these examples. Additionally, besides provisions themselves, trade policies and agreements can lead to the diffusion of novel ideas and policy concepts that have gender implications (Korinek et al., 2021). Moreover, inclusiveness is introduced in other forms such as reaffirmation to commitments

under other international instruments, the right to regulate provisions to ensure balance with respect to childcare, maternity needs, etc., and inclusion of gender expressions in the agreement's preamble or general objectives clause, which can shed light on the interpretation of the whole agreement.

3.3.1. INCORPORATION OF GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN CHAPTERS OTHER THAN GENDER CHAPTERS

Besides explicitly introducing gender considerations in a chapter dedicated to gender, there are also trade agreements that introduce gender equality concerns in chapters on other relevant issues such as labour. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which entered into force in 2020 as an update of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), is one such example. USMCA does not have a gender chapter but contains language recognizing the importance of gender equality, such as in the chapter on small- and medium-sized enterprises, in which the parties agree to collaborate on promoting small businesses owned by underrepresented groups, including women. But the chapter that addresses the links between gender and trade in the most substantive fashion is the labour chapter. It recognizes the three governments' commitment to fundamental labour rights, including elimination of discrimination in employment and promotion of women's equality in the workplace. The labour chapter also includes progressive objectives such as cooperating to eliminate discrimination in employment and wages, promoting equal pay for equal work, considering gender issues related to occupational safety and health (including childcare and nursing mothers), and preventing gender-based workplace violence and harassment (USTR, 2020). USMCA's labour chapter is subject to the agreement's dispute settlement provisions. This places the burden of proof on the party alleged to be in violation of the agreement. In other words, USMCA creates a rebuttable presumption that an alleged violation of labour commitments affects trade and investment, unless demonstrated otherwise. USMCA also introduces a cultural reservation to protect market access of indigenous women engaged in cross-border trade in services.

Box 22 presents a comparison of labour provisions with trade and gender provisions. Interested readers can refer to ILO (2022) for a detailed review of labour provisions in trade agreements and the typologies in place.

Box 22. Comparing trade and gender with trade and labour provisions

Labour provisions have been included in trade agreements since 1994, and so the trade and labour arena offers valid points of comparison regarding the effectiveness of gender provisions. A first similarity is that some developing countries are wary about raising social issues (including labour standards or gender issues) in trade discussions. The reason is the concern that richer countries could use these as a pretext to limit their imports from developing countries, i.e. to limit competition in areas in which developing countries enjoy competitive or comparative advantage. Those arguing for the inclusion of labour and other social standards in trade agreements say that doing so would establish internationally agreed-upon universal rights that can apply to all workers irrespective of country and thus avoid a downward harmonization of labour standards (Cagatay, 2001). Others contend that these social standards enjoy global legal protection through the International Labour Organization Conventions and human rights treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and that these should be enforced through the supervisory and implementation mechanisms of those treaties.

While fears about the possible protectionist effects of labour standards have completely blocked any discussion on the topic in the World Trade Organization, they have been less stridently expressed as regards gender, as discussed above. And both labour and gender issues are now included in regional and bilateral trade agreements.

A second similarity is that research has shown that labour provisions in trade agreements have been an important tool for raising awareness about workers' rights, increasing stakeholder involvement in negotiation and implementation phases, and developing domestic institutions to better monitor and enforce labour standards. Such labour provisions have also led to the improvement of laws and legislation with respect to workers' rights. This is less the case of gender provisions to date, but this might evolve as provisions relating to gender become a more common feature of trade agreements.

In other aspects, experience with labour standards shows that the approach has limitations. One is that the cooperation approach focuses so much on the institutional meetings and reporting procedures that the question of whether actual progress in workers' rights and labour standards is being achieved is insufficiently addressed. Another is that, even when the labour provisions are subject to the agreement's dispute settlement provisions, it can be hard to prove that a particular violation of a labour standard was linked to trade.

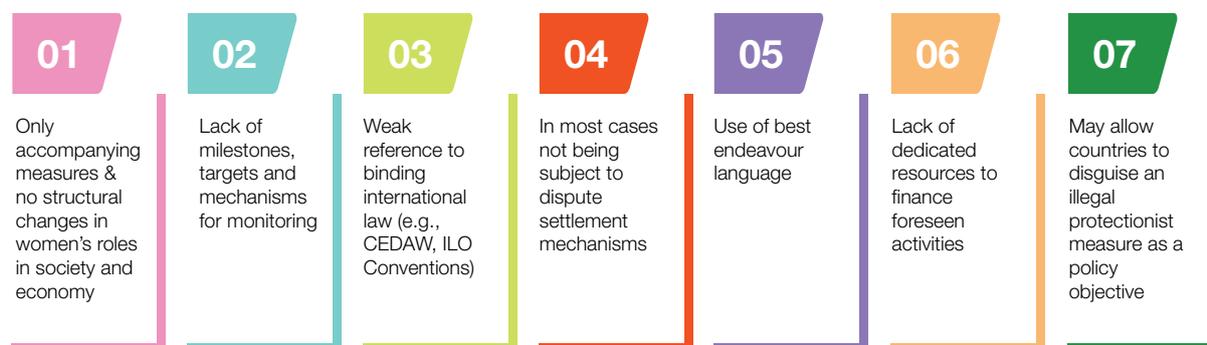
Sources: ILO (2016b); Harrison et al. (2018).

3.3.2. EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER PROVISIONS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS

Is the increased inclusion of substantive gender provisions or dedicated gender chapters an effective way of mainstreaming gender in trade agreements? As most such provisions or chapters are very recent, there is not yet evidence about how these have been applied in practice and whether they have led to better outcomes for women. One can nevertheless note their positive effects. Inclusion of gender language has significantly raised the profile of gender equality issues in

trade discourse. It has encouraged broader participation by civil society and the private sector in trade policy formulation and in monitoring how trade agreements play out in practice. And the explicit gender lens in trade agreements has enhanced the cooperation of other ministries with trade officials. In Chile, for example, the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity now participates in trade negotiations, and the Trade Policy and Negotiations Branch at Global Affairs Canada appointed a gender focal point in 2018. However, as formulated so far, these provisions also have some shortcomings. Figure 15 provides an overview of these points.

Figure 15. The shortcomings of gender provisions in trade agreements



Source: Bahri (2021b).

Note: CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; ILO: International Labour Organization.

To overcome the shortcomings of the present approach and to enhance positive outcomes, a first step would be to ensure that women's groups and other civil society representatives are more involved in the negotiation, design and implementation of trade agreements. Moreover, sensitizing trade officials to the gender implications of trade would contribute to the process of moving away from a gender-blind trade policy stance to a gender-aware, and then a gender-responsive, stance. Ex ante impact assessments could be useful in the drafting stage, as discussed above. Finally, monitoring implementation of the measures and making sure that funds are available for their execution would strengthen the positive impact of including gender considerations in trade agreements. Some analysts have gone a step further and recommended including provisions in the agreements to allow parties to reserve the right to invoke exemptions explicitly favouring women, such as permitting parties to implement temporary special measures favouring women, a provision encouraged by the CEDAW (Dommen, 2021). However, no country has so far expressed an intention to do so. Besides overcoming these shortcomings, it is also important to address the hesitations of countries to assume such commitments or mainstream gender in their trade agreements or policies. There are fears of moral imperialism, high compliance costs, and a lack of understanding, data, and expertise, among others (Bahri and Boklan, 2022).

Questions for Discussion

- Discuss the pros and cons of including gender provisions in trade agreements.

- Illustrate examples of trade agreements that, in your opinion, address gender issues in an effective manner.

3.4. TRADE AND GENDER IN THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

This section focuses on the steps taken by WTO members to mainstream gender in trade policy.

3.4.1. THE 2017 WTO JOINT DECLARATION ON TRADE AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Gender provisions have been integrated into trade agreements vigorously, but there is no a trade and gender agreement or the mandate to negotiate it within the WTO. However, the WTO Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment has represented a major push by WTO members. The declaration was adopted at the margins of the Buenos Aires Ministerial Conference (MC11) in December 2017, and therefore is not included in the official outcome of the conference. It has been endorsed by 127 WTO members and observers.

Those who have endorsed the declaration agree to collaborate on making trade and development policies more gender-responsive by taking the following steps: (i) sharing experiences relating to policies and programmes to encourage women's participation in the economy, (ii) sharing best practices for conducting gender-based analysis and monitoring of trade policies, (iii) sharing methods and procedures to collect

gender-disaggregated data, using indicators, and analysing gender-focused statistics related to trade, (iv) working together with the WTO to remove barriers for women's economic empowerment and increase their participation in trade, and (v) ensuring that Aid for Trade supports tools and know-how for analysing, designing and implementing more gender-responsive trade policies.

The Buenos Aires Joint Declaration is the first document fully devoted to gender issues in the WTO framework, and it marked a decisive step forward in putting trade and gender on the international trade agenda. It is significant in that it reflects that the trade community has moved from its long-standing approach that trade

is “gender-neutral” to formally recognizing that trade has a different impact on men and women and gender inequalities.

In terms of practice, the declaration identifies two existing WTO instruments that can be used to make trade more gender-inclusive (World Bank and WTO, 2020). First, under the Trade Policy Review (TPR) mechanism, WTO members carry out periodic assessments of each member's trade policies. An increasing number of TPRs refer to trade policies, practices or measures to support women's economic empowerment. As a second instrument, the Aid for Trade initiative, could be used to support women's participation in trade (box 23).

Box 23. How far is gender mainstreamed into the Aid for Trade Initiative?

The Aid for Trade Initiative has a clear mandate to carry out work on gender, and donors and partner countries have gradually increased the integration of gender into their Aid for Trade objectives since 2007. According to the 2019 OECD-WTO Aid for Trade Monitoring and Evaluation Exercise, 84 per cent of donors' Aid for Trade strategies and 85 per cent of partner countries' national or regional development strategies seek to promote women's economic empowerment. Women entrepreneurs (e.g. traders, farmers) constitute the main target group of gender-related aid for trade. The proportion of gender-responsive aid for trade has increased over time, from 9 per cent in 2006–2007 to 24 per cent in 2016–2017, on average.

The distribution of gender-marked aid for trade among the categories of trade policy, economic infrastructure and productive capacity remained stable over time. Economic infrastructure projects (e.g. transport, energy and communications) have the highest share in total gender-marked aid for trade due to high hardware costs, while the share of trade policy is small because most projects are lower-cost technical assistance projects. Productive capacity includes a wide range of economic sectors including agriculture, fisheries, mining, industry, finance and business. In 2016–2017, agriculture had the highest share of gender-marked aid for trade, but there is a need to expand gender-marked aid to other economic sectors.

Members set objectives in their development or aid strategies and define priority areas of work while designing their Aid for Trade programmes. Gender is fully part of members' Aid for Trade objectives, but it has not been fully integrated into their Aid for Trade priorities. Instead, export diversification, trade-related infrastructure, trade policy and regulations, competitiveness, access to global value chains and trade facilitation constitute the priorities of partner countries. This disconnection between objectives and priorities could explain why it is difficult to examine the impact of Aid for Trade on women's economic empowerment. It also shows the challenge to translate objectives into effective programming. For example, it is challenging to assess how building trade-related infrastructure could affect women's empowerment. These trends are confirmed by Aid for Trade flows. Gender-related Aid for Trade interventions can be either gender-specific projects or projects where gender is one of the focus areas. Almost all flows go to projects where gender is one among several objectives, while little is disbursed to gender-specific projects, according to data for 2006–2016.

Sources: Der Boghossian (2019a); OECD (2019b).

3.4.2. THE WTO INFORMAL WORKING GROUP

In September 2020, a group of WTO members agreed to establish an Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender (IWG) to intensify efforts to increase women's participation in international trade. The IWG formulated a Joint Ministerial Declaration on the Advancement of Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment within Trade. The declaration was not tabled at the 12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, however, the three co-chairs of the IWG issued a statement stressing that gender-responsive trade policies can contribute to women's economic empowerment which in turn is essential to support sustainable peace and development.³⁹

3.5. OTHER AVENUES FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO TRADE POLICY

This section presents some of the alternative ways to integrate gender considerations into trade policy.

3.5.1. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES ON TRADE POLICY

Ministries and government agencies in charge of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment are involved in trade policy formulation and implementation only in a few WTO members (Der Boghossian, 2019b). Besides increasing the involvement of such ministries and agencies in trade policy processes, it is also important to have a gender balance among trade negotiators and officers in trade ministries. This would help ensure that trade policy is more responsive to women's needs and gender equality concerns.

Having gender balance among customs officials is another way of increasing women's participation in the trade policy implementation process. Offering gender awareness training to customs officials, who are most often men, would also help reduce gender-based harassment at border crossings. To this end, since 2013, the World Customs Organization has developed the Gender Equality Organizational Assessment Tool to assist customs administrations in

assessing their policies, practice and activities to see where to further address gender equality concerns.

3.5.2. TRADE FACILITATION

Trade facilitation is commonly understood as improving the transparency and efficiency of international trade procedures to reduce the time and financial costs of international trade transactions. Indeed, logistics efficiency can be just as significant for a firm's competitiveness as its productive efficiency. Narrowly intended, trade facilitation refers to the simplification of trade procedures, such as procedures for customs clearance. More broadly intended, trade facilitation is concerned with the establishment of trade-related infrastructure (e.g. transport and storage), delivery of supply-side services to enhance productive capacity (e.g. market information services or *agricultural extension services*), and the delivery of aid for the implementation of trade policy reforms. In 2013, WTO members adopted the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which entered into force in 2017. Its objective is to boost global trade by expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods. The agreement contains provisions aimed at simplification, harmonization and standardization of border procedures, along with provisions for technical assistance and capacity-building in this area. By March 2022, about 94 per cent of the WTO membership had ratified the TFA.

Although the TFA does not include any reference to gender, an increasing number of trade facilitation initiatives aim to support women's participation in international trade. There is growing recognition that trade facilitation efforts should not only focus on the experience of large companies that trade in large quantities but should also aim to reduce the cost of trading across borders for smaller firms. As self-employed women and women entrepreneurs often own and/or manage MSMEs, and as MSMEs employ high numbers of women, initiatives to facilitate MSMEs in trade will be positive for women.

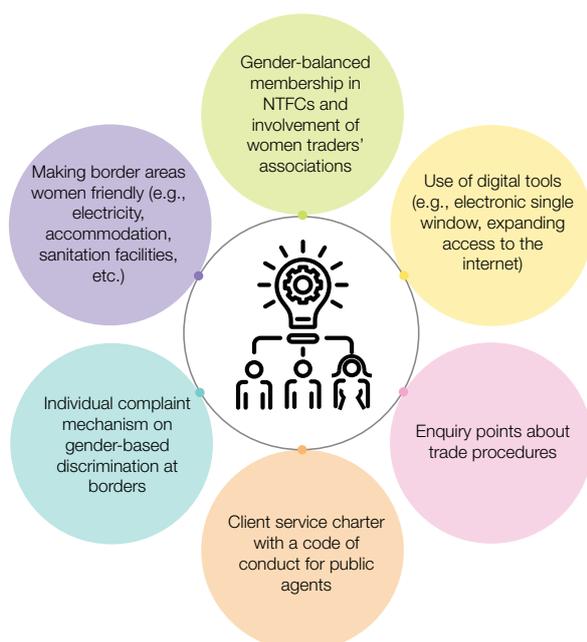
Implementing the TFA through a gender lens is an important step forward to increase the benefits from trade for women. For example, the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, a public-private partnership that works with countries to implement the TFA,

³⁹ <https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:WT/MIN22/7.pdf&Open=True>

has developed a tool to implement trade facilitation measures with a view to their gender-sensitivity. This provides guidance on specific actions that can be taken in favour of gender equality when implementing the TFA.

National trade facilitation committees, which are consultative multi-stakeholder platforms that aim to support the promotion and implementation of trade facilitation reforms, need to better incorporate gender issues into their agendas. According to a 2018 survey by UNCTAD (2018c)⁴⁰, only 36 per cent of the members of the national trade facilitation committees were women, and 62 per cent were chaired or co-chaired by a man. Moreover, among the 39 countries surveyed, only one country indicated the committee has ever taken a decision or action to mainstream gender in trade facilitation. Figure 16 provides a list of policy recommendations to make trade facilitation gender-responsive.

Figure 16. How to make trade facilitation initiatives gender responsive



Source: UNCTAD (2022d).

Note: NTFCs: national trade facilitation committees.

3.5.3. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Domestic policies that support a conducive business environment and firms' business capacity are also relevant for promoting women's empowerment through trade. For example, public procurement programmes that favour MSMEs or, more directly, women-led/owned firms, could help them access new business opportunities. There are certain barriers faced by women-owned business when competing for public tenders, including inadequate national legislation and policies, misfit tender design, excessive requirements, poor government practices, lack of information, and limited capability (ITC, 2020b). It should be highlighted that no one size fits all and each country should develop an approach to public procurement that fits its national context. Table 5 gives an overview of selected country cases in this regard.

Table 5. Public procurement for women's economic empowerment: Selected cases

Country	Policy example
United States	Voluntary quotas (23 per cent of public procurement contracts reserved for small and medium-sized enterprises, 5 per cent for majority-women-owned firms)
Switzerland	Preference given to companies that respect equal pay policies (Applies only to firms with 50 or more employees, certified through a free tool, and checked for compliance)
Kenya	Quota for disadvantaged groups (30 per cent of public procurement is reserved for women, youth and persons with disabilities)
Republic of Korea	Quota for women-led firms, small and medium-sized enterprises and disadvantaged groups (5 per cent of total purchase amount of goods and services reserved for women)

Source: WTO (2018).

Chile deserves special attention as a developing country with one of the most transparent public procurement systems in the world. The country has increased the number of women supplying to the government by 200,000 in less than two years through using training, certification and an online marketplace (box 24).

⁴⁰ <https://unctad.org/topic/transport-and-trade-logistics/trade-facilitation/national-trade-facilitation-bodies/aggregated-data>

Box 24. Making public procurement gender-responsive: The case of ChileCompra

The 2003 Law on Procurement governs public procurement in Chile and regulates the public supply of goods and services. The Procurement Regulation, which provides the details of public procurement processes, led to the establishment of the procurement entity ChileCompra, whose Internet portal (www.chilecompras.cl) centralizes public procurement and digitizes it to a large extent. It has an e-marketplace, Mercado Público (www.mercadopublico.cl), on which micro and small firms constitute 90 per cent of companies selling their products and services. The online marketplace helps combat corruption and increases efficiency through competitiveness and transparency. Even though there are no quotas, small and medium-sized enterprises win more contracts thanks to this simplified system and to being more competitive than large firms in most cases.

According to Comunidad Mujer, an important non-governmental organization championing women's equality, 26 per cent of total procurement transactions between 2007 and 2013 in Chile involved women-owned businesses. In 2015, ChileCompra implemented an action plan that targets gender-specific constraints and helps women access the same public procurement opportunities as men. Both regulations and guidelines were modified to incorporate gender considerations, and gender-specific evaluation criteria were added. For example, Chile amended its regulations to guarantee the hiring of women-owned businesses for procurement under US\$600. Public offices offer free Internet access at different locations. ChileCompra has implemented training programmes in regional offices throughout Chile, and has a management improvement programme with a chapter on gender. The action plan resulted in an increase in the share of women participating in the public procurement programme to 36.5 per cent in 2016. Of those women, 64 per cent are the main breadwinners of their households. The increased efficiency of the public procurement system also benefited the government with savings of more than US\$6,353 billion between 2003 and 2018 compared to a cost of only US\$168 billion to run the programme.

The main challenge with increasing the share of women in public procurement is identifying which firms are truly led or owned by women. In this regard, certification and identification can be a barrier to entry, as they can be expensive especially for small businesses in which women hold a high share. ChileCompra facilitates online registration of women-owned businesses through its supplier certification programme called Sello Mujer ('Women's Seal'). A company is counted as women-owned if more than 50 per cent of the shares are owned by women, and the legal representative or head of the company is a woman.

Despite this remarkable progress, however, barriers remain. Women entrepreneurs say that tender procedures are often too complex and technical, and that financial eligibility requirements can be challenging. They claim that the evaluation criteria are sometimes too strict and focus too intently on the cheapest bid. They also say that contracts are excessively large, and payments often are late.

Sources: ITC (2020c); WTO (2018).

Government procurement is excluded from the WTO's multilateral trade agreements. However, as a plurilateral agreement within the framework of the WTO, the 2012 Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) requires open, fair and transparent conditions for competition in government procurement.⁴¹ Only 48 WTO members are part of the agreement, and 35 WTO members/observers participate in the Committee on Government Procurement as observers. Eleven of those were in the process of acceding to the agreement as of August 2022. It is recognized that lowering the barriers to public procurement for all firms would disproportionately favour MSMEs, in which women are concentrated. Although there are no global figures, it is estimated that the share of women-owned firms participating in public procurement contracts

is between 2-5 per cent in the GPA parties and the European Union member states (WTO, 2018).

Most governments introduce preference schemes for women-owned firms with a quota allocation of around 20 per cent on average (some of them focus on local procurement to support rural development). Some members have specific provisions in public procurement laws that prohibit gender-based discrimination in contract allocations, while others give priority to firms that have gender equality or wage equality policies (der Boghossian, 2019b).

Meanwhile, chapters on government procurement are increasingly included in trade agreements. These could adversely affect small-scale women producers by limiting governments' scope to favour them

⁴¹ Plurilateral means that not all WTO members are parties to the agreement.

over foreign producers in public purchasing. Trade negotiators should therefore ensure that new rules on public procurement explicitly provide for exceptions to allow measures in favour of women producers (ECLAC, 2019).

3.5.4. OTHER INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT WOMEN IN TRADE

Despite its critical role, trade policy cannot address all the gender inequality issues that are relevant for women's successful participation in international trade. Trade policy needs to be complemented with targeted domestic policies to address existing gender inequalities in the three domains of economic and social life: capabilities, access to resources and opportunities, and security domains.

There are various initiatives by governments, the private sector, civil society, and international organizations to support women's participation in international trade. Besides implementing domestic policies, many governments use unilateral and bilateral trade policy as a way to promote women's empowerment, for example, through preferential access schemes (e.g. Generalized System of Preferences, Everything but Arms), by providing incentives for producers who apply gender standards, or by giving priority to goods produced by such producers.

Besides government initiatives, the private sector also introduces gender-focused initiatives or incorporates gender into its corporate social responsibility programmes. These efforts target various areas, including access to training for skills development, education, health, leadership, financial management, awareness-raising, procurement preferences and gender-based violence. The private sector also collaborates with civil society and international organizations, including through such efforts as the Women's Empowerment Principles, a joint initiative of UN Women and United Nations Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the International Trade Centre's "She Trades" initiative (World Bank and WTO, 2020).

International organizations also introduce initiatives directly themselves. UNCTAD's online course on gender and trade, which aims to train policymakers and other stakeholders to develop gender-responsive

trade policy, is an example of such an initiative. Another example is the WTO training module focusing on gender-responsive trade policies and how to implement WTO rules through a gender lens. The UNCTAD-led eTrade for Women initiative, which aims to empower women entrepreneurs through ICT, is another example. Within the Aid for Trade Initiative, Empower Women, Power Trade was created in 2019 as an initiative under the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), a multilateral partnership to help the least developed countries use trade as an engine for growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

3.5.5. CASE STUDY: THE AFCFTA'S NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES⁴²

One regional trade agreement that includes more countries than any other is the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which entered into force on 30 May 2019. Africa officially started trading under the AfCFTA agreement on 1 January 2021.

The AfCFTA agreement does not have a separate chapter on trade and gender but does advance the principle of gender equality. The preamble puts forward the importance of gender equality for the development of international trade and economic cooperation. Article 3 emphasizes the promotion of gender equality as one of the general objectives of AfCFTA, and Article 27 of the Protocol on Trade in Services acknowledges the need to improve the export capacity of formal and informal service suppliers, with particular attention to MSME operators and women and youth service suppliers.

The AfCFTA agreement has the potential to expand women's economic opportunities, but these gains will not be automatic. As AfCFTA parties turn to implementing the agreement, there is a need to ensure that gender equality considerations are effectively operationalized. Gender mainstreaming is seen as a key strategy to give effect to gender equality provisions in the AfCFTA agreement, and to inform a gender-sensitive implementation of other provisions.

The approach to gender mainstreaming has been designed in accordance with specific components

⁴² This section draws on Bayat (2021).

Box 25. Measures for women in Senegal's National Strategy for Implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area

The drafting of Senegal's National Strategy for Implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (NS-AfCFTA) involved around 80 participants, including representatives of 10 government ministries, 16 private sector groups, and four civil society organizations. Two thematic working groups bringing together all stakeholders have been set up under the aegis of the sectoral ministries responsible for gender and youth. The priority action plan of the NS-AfCFTA includes targeted activities aimed at increasing the contribution of women and youth in the development of productive capacities, and creating new opportunities to access export markets for goods and services. Specific projects will provide training to women and youth on business skills, increase women's participation in trade advocacy, support the creation of small and medium-sized processing industries and service businesses in the regions, and support market diversification by making trade information available on Senegal's export markets and organizing exploratory missions in targeted market.

Source: AfCFTA Secretariat and UNDP (2020).

and elements set out in the proposed framework for the design of an AfCFTA national strategy. It reflects the understanding that to fully reap the benefits of increased intra-African trade flows, it is necessary to design domestic policy measures to correct for gender inequalities (Zarrilli, 2017). UNECA has recognized that without complementary domestic policies, for instance, the gender wage gap may be used to drive competitiveness in exports and keep women in low-productive activities and sectors that may also be at risk of automation.

A proposed framework for the design of an AfCFTA national strategy with defined components and elements has been set out in the AfCFTA national strategy framework.⁴³ The main components of the approach consider the factors that may block women's access to economic opportunities in priority sectors, and analyse gender differences in access to productive inputs and finance. Gender mainstreaming can also be used to identify non-traditional sectors and products with high export potential, as well as regional value chains that could have a positive socioeconomic impact, specifically in creating decent jobs for women. This process helps identify opportunities in key regional value chains, specifically in creating productive employment and decent jobs in the aftermath of COVID-19, and in the agriculture, manufacturing and services sectors, which are expected to gain new trade opportunities through the AfCFTA agreement. Particular attention is paid to examining potential AfCFTA-related risks and gender-specific constraints for women, who tend to be disproportionately affected by trade barriers and persistent gender inequalities

in key economic sectors and in different economic roles. Box 25 presents the case of Senegal's national implementation strategy for implementation of the AfCFTA.

Ensuring that women benefit from the opportunities created by AfCFTA through gender-sensitive implementation of the agreement's provisions requires eliminating procedural obstacles and tackling gender-specific barriers that confront women, including in the areas of trade facilitation, technical barriers to trade, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures (Bayat, 2021). In parallel, to enhance the knowledge of policymakers and other stakeholders on how to advance gender-equal outcomes in the AfCFTA, UNECA's African Trade Policy Centre, together with the Institute for Economic Development and Planning, have offered an online course on "Gender Mainstreaming in National AfCFTA Strategies."

Questions for Discussion

- If your country has set up a National Trade Facilitation Committee, does its work have a gender component? What would you recommend to improve mainstreaming of gender in trade facilitation for your country?
- Countries should make more effort to ensure representation of women and gender experts in trade delegations. In what ways do you think this would help move towards greater gender equality in the context of trade?

⁴³ For the full AfCFTA national strategy framework, see UNECA (2019).

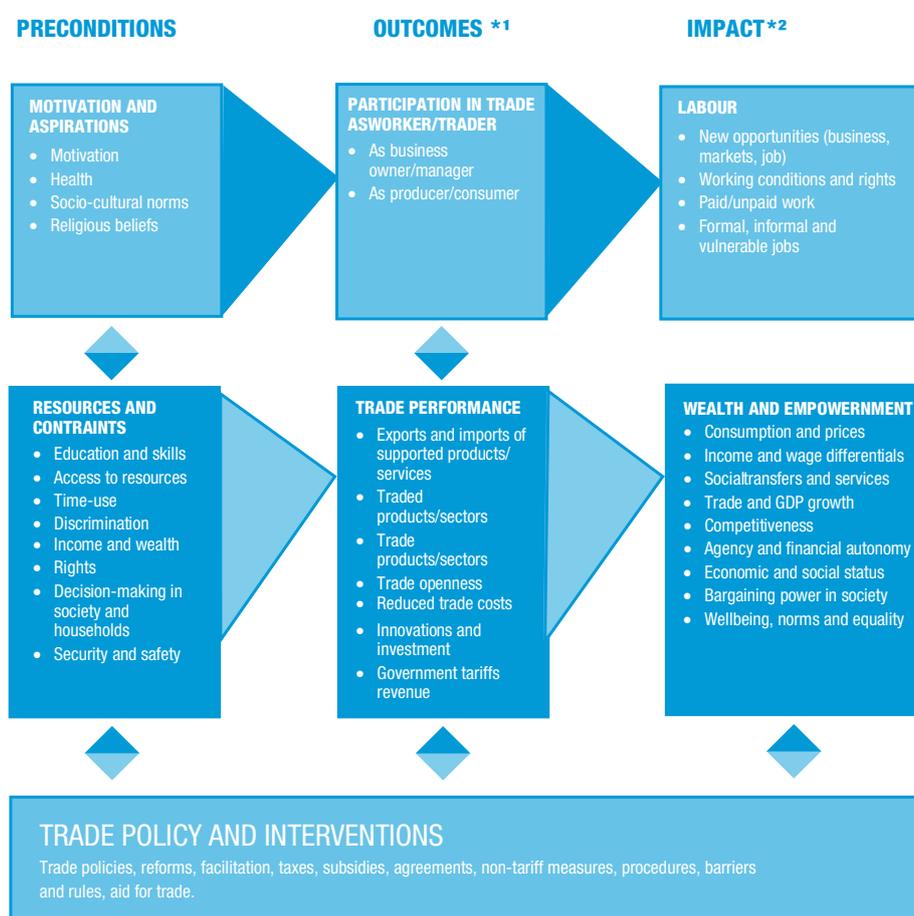
3.6. CONCLUSION: MODULE 3

Gender issues are increasingly being taken into consideration in trade policymaking. There is an increase in the number of trade agreements with gender-equality-related provisions or chapters, and more countries and regions are introducing gender mainstreaming tools in their trade policy processes. There are also developments within the multilateral trading system toward greater recognition of gender issues in trade policymaking.

One of the challenges regarding gender mainstreaming in trade is to make sure that all the actors who can play a role are involved and that their actions are interconnected and well-coordinated. Gender-equality-related goals in trade agreements should be accompanied by financial provisions and monitoring mechanisms to improve their efficacy. Gender impact assessments and development assistance programmes need to be better utilized to this end.

ANNEX

Figure A.1. Framework for the measurement of gender and trade linkages



Source: UNCTAD (2018d, 2020c).

Notes: ¹ Immediate short-term outcomes of a change. ² Longer-term effects of the outcomes on lives and living conditions.

A.1. MEASUREMENT OF GENDER INEQUALITY

This annex presents an overview of major indicators of gender inequality, focusing only on individual indicators and not aggregate ones.⁴⁴ This is because composite indices are of limited use for analyses that aim to disentangle multiple dimensions of the gender and trade nexus, which is the focus of this teaching volume.

A1.1. AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA

Interactions between trade and gender are complex and inherently challenging to measure. Therefore, developing statistics on gender and trade requires identifying the dimensions to be measured and defining the related concepts. The conceptual framework in figure A.1 can help trade policymakers and national statistical officers review what data already exist for the measurement of trade and gender. The framework

⁴⁴ Aggregate indices of gender equality include the Gender Development Index and the Gender Inequality Index produced by the United Nations Development Programme for its Human Development Report since 1995; the Gender Gap Index produced by the World Economic Forum since 2006; and the Social Institutions and Gender Index calculated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development since 2009.

disaggregates the interdependent measurement challenges for gender in trade by four key dimensions: preconditions, outcomes, impacts, and trade policy. Trade policy may influence the other three dimensions.

The best sources of *sex-disaggregated data* are household surveys that are collected for different purposes. For example, household labour force surveys concentrate on labour market statistics such as labour market status and on employed individuals' work characteristics such as sector, occupation, contract type, formal status of work, union membership, wages, hours worked, etc. Household budget surveys focus on consumption patterns of households. Income and living condition surveys gather information on household members' income sources, their use of social spending, and non-monetary measures of wellbeing. Household surveys are usually designed and implemented by national statistical offices, although there are some surveys sponsored by international organizations as well (e.g. the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Survey and Enterprise Survey). Apart from household surveys (e.g. labour, budget, living conditions), the following official statistical surveys and registers may also provide valuable data for the analysis of trade and gender: statistical business registers, structural business statistics, international trade in goods and services statistics, and combined employer-employee data.

Despite improvements over time, the problem of data availability is more acute in some domains than in others (and in some developing regions more than others). The capability domain contains the largest number of comparable cross-country indicators. However, very few reliable indicators are available for the security domain, and data gaps are also prevalent in the domain of access to resources and economic opportunities. Relevant indicators for each of these domains are presented in the next sub-section.

In addition, a frequent problem with many low-income countries' statistics, especially on employment, is that they lack the level of sectoral disaggregation, especially in agriculture and manufacturing, that is commonly used in trade classifications. This undermines the capacity to carry out comprehensive gender impact assessments of trade liberalization, for example. Irregularity of such surveys is another shortcoming. Moreover, certain indicators on household income and consumption patterns are gathered at the household

level, thus not enabling disaggregation by sex at the individual level. Such data need to be analysed based on the sex of the household head, so it is important to check how female-headed households are defined while making comparisons across datasets. Finally, for a comprehensive analysis of gender and trade linkages, data collected for different purposes (e.g. labour market, living conditions, trade) need to be linked to each other. This way, one can merge detailed trade statistics with labour market data to analyse, for example, the gender impact of trade on labour market outcomes at a more disaggregated level to carry out robust analysis. The challenge is to address how to link these data across domains. Samples of households and businesses are based on diverse populations, and statistics are collected for specialized purposes and for different statistical units and frequencies.

Relative and absolute measures of gender inequality

Gender inequalities can be measured in relative and absolute terms.

In relative terms, gender inequality can be assessed in different ways. One approach is to construct a ratio of female-to-male achievement that can be called the Gender Parity Index (GPI). It is calculated as:

$$GPI_i^t = \frac{F_i^t}{M_i^t}, \quad (A.1)$$

where F_i^t and M_i^t are the female and male values of indicator i at time t , respectively. For example, for educational enrolment, the GPI is calculated by dividing the enrolment rate for girls by that of boys for a given level of education. A GPI score of 1 indicates parity between the sexes. A GPI score that is closer to 0 suggests a bigger disadvantage for girls.

A second approach is to calculate the relative gap as the difference between the values of men and women divided by the value of men for a given indicator, which, in percentage terms, is given by the following formula:⁴⁵

$$Relative_Gap_i^t = \frac{M_i^t - F_i^t}{M_i^t} * 100, \quad (A.2)$$

where M_i^t and F_i^t are defined as above. The relative gap can also be measured in terms of wages and, in this case, it is usually referred to as the gender wage gap.

⁴⁵ Rearranging terms, the relative gap can also be calculated as $1-GPI$. Therefore, the closer the relative gap is to 0, the greater the parity between the sexes.

In absolute terms, gender inequality can be calculated as the absolute difference between the values of men and women for a given indicator.

The GPI is one of the most commonly used measures of gender inequalities, but it has some drawbacks. In some cases, a ratio of 1 (i.e. full gender parity) might be misleading, as in the case of infant mortality.⁴⁶ In general, a change in a ratio does not show the direction of change in its individual components and makes it hard to carry out an accurate assessment. For example, an increase in the ratio of women's average wage to men's average wage does not necessarily derive from an increase in women's wages, but rather can, for instance, result from either a fall in men's wages with women's wages remaining constant, or a decline in both women's and men's wages with men's wages declining faster. Without additional information, the researcher would not be able to determine whether improvements in this

ratio reflect increases in women's wages (desirable) or decreases in men's wages (undesirable). Therefore, a correct interpretation of ratios requires trend analysis of the underlying indicators.

As opposed to relative measures, absolute measures use a fixed threshold against which outcomes are measured. For example, maternal mortality is measured against the benchmark of maximum achievement, in other words, the country with the lowest mortality rate.

A1.2. GENDER-DISAGGREGATED INDICATORS FOR EMPLOYMENT, INCOME AND ASSETS

Table A.1 presents the key indicators on gender equality in the access to resources and economic opportunities domain, and lists their strengths and weaknesses.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ A ratio of 1 for infant mortality rates would be an example of gender bias favouring boys rather than equality of survival, since it is well known that girls enjoy a biological survival advantage over boys in infancy.

⁴⁷ The table lists economic indicators that could be calculated using survey data.

Table A.1. Summary of gender indicators for employment, income and assets

Indicator	Category	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses
Labour force participation rate (LFPR)	Paid employment	$LFPR_i^t = \frac{EMP_i^t + U_i^t}{POP_i^t} * 100$ <p> EMP_i^t = number of employed of gender i at time t U_i^t = number of unemployed but seeking employment of gender i at time t POP_i^t = population of working age of gender i at time t </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most widely used indicator of gender inequality in the labour market • Data availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information on quality of work for the employed • May undercount workers who work in their homes and therefore do not report such work as employment
Female-to-male employment ratio	Paid employment	$EmpRatio^t = \frac{FEMP^t}{MEMP^t} * 100$ <p> $FEMP^t$ = number of women employed at time t $MEMP^t$ = number of men employed at time t </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most widely used indicator of gender inequality in employment • Data availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information on quality of work for the employed • May undercount workers who work in their homes and therefore do not report such work as employment
Sectoral composition of employment	Paid employment	$EmpShare_i^t = \frac{EMP_i^t}{TOTEMP_i^t} * 100$ <p> EMP_i^t = number of employed in sector i at time t $TOTEMP_i^t$ = total number of employed at time t i: agriculture, industry, services Calculated for men and women separately </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows distribution of employed men and women across economic sectors • Data availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad sectors may disguise differences across sub-sectors in each broad sector • When data available, more disaggregated sectoral classifications could be used
Employment composition by work status	Paid employment	$EmpShare_i^t = \frac{EMP_i^t}{TOTEMP_i^t} * 100$ <p> EMP_i^t = number of employed in work status i at time t $TOTEMP_i^t$ = total number of employed at time t i: employees, employers, own-account workers, contributing female workers Calculated for men and women separately </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows distribution of employed men and women across work status categories • Provides a broad measure of employment quality • Data availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad categories of work status may disguise differences in terms of skill requirements and pay within each category
Female share of paid non-agricultural employment (FPNAE)	Paid employment	$FPNAE^t = \frac{FNAE^t}{NAEMP^t} * 100$ <p> $FNAE^t$ = number of women in paid non-agricultural employment at time t $NAEMP^t$ = total number of persons in paid non-agricultural employment at time t </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors progress on Sustainable Development Goal 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not capture quality of work • In developing countries, paid non-agricultural work only represents a small fraction of employment

Indicator	Category	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses
Informal employment share (IE)	Paid employment	$IE_i^t = \frac{INFEMP_i^t}{TOTEMP_i^t}$ <p>$INFEMP_i^t$ = sum of the number of employees not protected by national labour legislation, entrepreneurs in informal units of production, and <i>contributing family workers</i> for gender i at time t</p> <p>$TOTEMP_i^t$ = total number of employed for gender i at time t</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broad measure of employment quality and job protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data availability might be an issue • Definition of informal employment may differ across surveys, making comparison difficult
Unemployment rates (UR)	Paid employment	$UR_i^t = \frac{U_i^t}{EMP_i^t + U_i^t}$ <p>U_i^t and EMP_i^t as above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important indicator of unemployment, especially in developed countries • Data availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In developing countries, visible unemployment may be low but is often disguised by underemployment and discouraged worker effects
Vulnerable Employment ratio (VEMP)	Paid employment	$VEMP_i^t = \frac{CFW_i^t + OEW_i^t}{TOTEMP_i^t} * 100$ <p>CFW_i^t = total number of persons in contributing family work at time t</p> <p>OEW_i^t = total number of persons in own-account work at time t</p> <p>$TOTEMP_i^t$ = total number of employed at time t</p> <p>Calculated for men and women separately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives a broad estimate on quality of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since it involves broad categories of work status, it might not reveal the exact degree of employment equality • Wage employment may also involve precarious forms of work and therefore may not be a good proxy for high-quality employment
Domestic work ratio (DWR)	Unpaid work	$DWR^t = \frac{DF^t}{DM^t}$ <p>DF^t = women's average hours per week spent on domestic work and care at time t</p> <p>DM^t = men's average hours per week spent on domestic work and care at time t</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts for the part of domestic work that falls on women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time use surveys are not readily available for many countries • When such surveys are available, they often are not carried out frequently
Dissimilarity index (DI) or Duncan Segregation Index	Occupational segregation	$ID = \frac{1}{2} \sum \left \frac{M_i}{M} - \frac{F_i}{F} \right $ <p>M_i = number of men in occupation i</p> <p>F_i = number of women in occupation i</p> <p>M = number of men employed</p> <p>F = number of women employed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures the percentage of employed women (or men) who would have to change occupations for perfect gender integration in the labour force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data availability might be an issue at detailed occupational categories • It is not a perfect measure of occupational gender discrimination

Indicator	Category	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses
Gender wage gap (GWG)	Earnings	$GWG = \frac{W_m^t - W_f^t}{W_m^t} * 100$ <p> W_m^t = Men's (hourly) wages at time t W_f^t = Women's (hourly) wages at time t </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys the extent of inequality in wages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data availability might be an issue Focuses on wage employment
Incidence of agricultural land owners (LO), disaggregated by sex ¹	Access to resources	Ratio of the number of women (men) agricultural landowners (sole and/or joint) to total women (men) adult population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A critical measure of gender inequality in agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data availability Legal ownership may not guarantee full control over such resources in traditional societies Land tenure systems and their design need to be assessed to better understand gender inequality in agricultural land use
Account ownership at a financial institution	Access to resources	Ratio of women (men) with an account at a financial institution to total adult female (male) population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A core measure of access to finance Data availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Account ownership may not necessarily be related to productive economic activities

Source: UNCTAD secretariat.

¹ The FAO's Gender and Land Rights database provide a compilation of various sex-disaggregated indicators of land ownership and holdership across countries.

A.2. MEASUREMENT OF TRADE OPENNESS, POLICY AND STRUCTURE

Table A.2 provides an overview of various trade measures.

Table A.2. Trade measures	
Openness in practice	
Measure	Definition
Volume of exports and/or imports	Volume (in quantity or value terms) of exports and/or imports in a specific point in time, usually a year
Total trade	Sum of exports and imports in a specific point in time
Trade share	Ratio between exports (and imports) and the country's GDP in national currency: $Trade = \frac{Export + Import}{GDP}$
Adjusted trade share	Ratio between exports and imports and the country's GDP in purchasing power parity. This measure is useful for correcting for the different prices of tradables and non-tradables in countries at different stages of development.
Growth rate in each trade measure	Change from one point in time to the next (usually a year) of the respective indicator
Openness in policy	
Measure	Definition
Tariff averages (simple or trade-weighted)	Simple average tariffs are calculated by adding up all the tariffs and dividing by the number of import categories. The simple average tends to overstate protection; the weighted average – calculated by weighing each tariff by the value of imports in the respective category – is therefore used to overcome this problem. This may, however, lead to the opposite problem, that of understating protection, since, for instance, prohibitively high tariffs would be underrepresented.
Effective rate of protection	The effective rate of protection estimates how a country's tariff structure protects the value added of industries at different stages of production. The idea is that the effective protection of a good is equal to the sum of protection applied to its components.
Coverage of quantitative restrictions or other non-tariff measures	The percentage of goods covered by quantitative restrictions (quotas) or other non-tariff barriers, such as export subsidies or import incentives
Trade structure	
Measure	Definition
Composition of merchandise exports (imports) by product groups	Percentage share of each export (import) product group in a country's total merchandise exports (imports) Product groups may be defined based on skill or technology content. Lall (2000) provides such a classification
Composition of services exports (imports) by service category	Percentage share of each export (import) service category in a country's total services exports (imports)
Broad measure of export (import) concentration	Number of products exported (or imported) at the three-digit product/sector classification
Export (import) concentration index	This index measures, for each country, the degree of concentration of goods exported (it does not include services). An export or import concentration index value closer to 1 indicates that a country's exports or imports are highly concentrated on a few products; values closer to 0 indicate that those exports or imports are more homogeneously distributed among a series of products.
Export (import) diversification index	The diversification index is computed by measuring the absolute deviation of the export (import) structure of a country from world structure. A value closer to 1 indicates greater divergence from the world pattern.

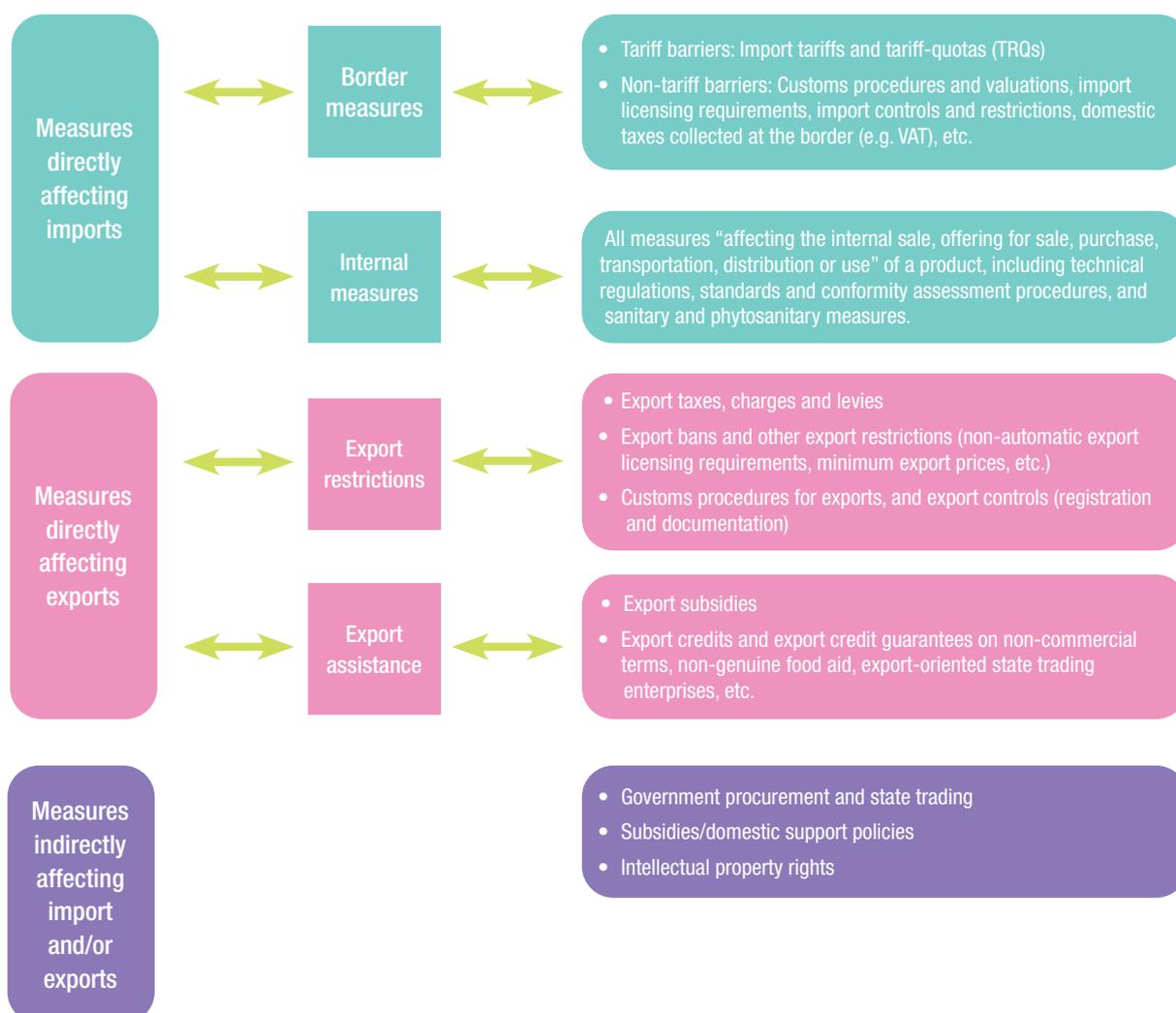
Source: Based on definitions in Edwards (1993) and McCulloch et al. (2001) and the UNCTAD secretariat's compilation.

Figure A.2 presents policy measures affecting imports and exports. The first type of measures relates to the degree of a country's import trade openness or, in other words, the degree of market access it grants. The second type of measures shapes a country's export competitiveness (e.g. export subsidies), among other things, but it may also serve domestic policy purposes, such as food security (e.g. export restrictions on domestically consumed staples).

For trade policy purposes, it is also important to distinguish between border and internal measures (as a matter of fact, a rather intractable distinction –

internal measures are often enforced at the border), and between tariffs and non-tariff measures. The figure also considers a wide spectrum of trade policies and instruments that affect domestic production and trade (from domestic support to state trading) although they are not specifically focused on the regulation of trade flows. Trade policy covers all these aspects, which are in practice complexly intertwined. It is also important to stress that the term “trade policy” is neutral in terms of policy direction: it covers both trade liberalization measures – aimed at the removal or reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers on the free exchange of goods and services – and protectionist measures.

Figure A.2. Trade policy measures



Source: UNCTAD secretariat

GLOSSARY

A

Agricultural extension services: Activities aimed at educating and training farmers on agricultural practices, including farming methods and techniques.

Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC): Sector-specific World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on trade in textiles and clothing that entered into force on 1 January 1995. Its main purpose was to secure the phasing out of restrictions on imports of textile and clothing products – set by the Multi-Fibre Arrangement – over a transitional period of 10 years, thereby integrating the textile and clothing sector into the rules and disciplines of the WTO by 2004.

B

Bargaining power: Relative capacity of one party to exert influence over another party during a negotiation or a dispute. The party with stronger bargaining power is able to secure an agreement closer to its own terms, thereby achieving a more desirable outcome.

Business process outsourcing/Business process operations (BPO): These two terms are used interchangeably to refer to subcontracting various business-related operations to a party outside the company. They can involve back office BPO (e.g. accounting, payment processing, human resources) as well as front office BPO (e.g. customer-related services, sales, marketing). Companies sometimes outsource operations to countries with lower income taxes and/or cheaper labour forces as cost-reduction measures.

C

Cash crop: Agricultural crop grown for sale and not for the farmer's own consumption.

Contract farming: Agricultural production carried out according to an agreement between a buyer and farmers that establishes conditions for the production and marketing of a farm product. Typically, the farmer commits to provide agreed-upon quantities of a specific agricultural product, which should meet the quality standards of the purchaser and be supplied at the time determined by the purchaser. In turn, the buyer commits to purchase the product and, in some cases, to support production through, for example, the supply of farm inputs, land preparation, and the provision of technical advice.

Contributing family worker: A self-employed individual in a market-oriented establishment managed by a related person living in the same household. Contributing family workers cannot be considered co-workers because their degree of commitment to the operation of the establishment in terms of working time or other factors is not comparable to that of the head of the establishment. Together with own-account workers, they form the two categories of vulnerable employment. See also "Own-account worker."

Cross-border trade: Buying and selling of goods and services, and related activities, between individuals or companies in neighbouring countries. See also "Informal cross-border trade."

D

Defeminization of labour: The decline in the share of female employment in any given sector or industry.

E

Economies of scale: Decrease in costs per unit of output that a firm experiences because its fixed costs can be spread over more units of output as production expands.

Entrepreneurship: There are several definitions of entrepreneurship. The empirical literature equates entrepreneurship with measures such as self-employment or new business activity. In contrast, the theoretical literature defines entrepreneurship based on personality traits, skills and behaviours. Entrepreneurs vary in their economic objectives, skills, roles in the economy and policy responses. Necessity-driven entrepreneurs are those who have no better options for work. Opportunity entrepreneurs are those who aim at wealth accumulation and at providing employment opportunities for others. Women entrepreneurs are more likely to be motivated by necessity.

Export competitiveness: A measure of the advantages or disadvantages a country faces when selling its products in international markets. It is measured in terms of lower unit (labour) costs of the country's exports compared to the unit (labour) costs of its international competitors. Improved export competitiveness may translate into increased trade performance, and create positive spillover effects on a country's economy as a whole.

Export-oriented policy: Also known as export-oriented or export-led industrialization, growth or

development policy, export-oriented policy refers to trade and economic policy aiming to promote industrialization by exporting goods for which a country has a comparative advantage. It implies opening domestic markets to foreign competition in exchange for market access in other countries. These policies were introduced in the 1970s and 1980s in many developing countries to replace the earlier import-substitution industrialization policy that relied on the protection of newly established industries from import competition during their infancy.

Export processing zones (EPZs): Areas generally set up in developing countries to attract foreign direct investment.

F

Factor endowments: Amount of production factors, typically land, labour and capital, that are available and can be exploited to produce goods and/or services within a country.

Feminization of labour: The increase in the share of women employed in wage work in a given sector as a result of the expansion of the manufacturing sector following, for example, a free trade agreement or foreign investment inflows.

G

Gender: Socially constructed differences in attributes and opportunities associated with being female or male. Aspects of gender vary greatly across socio-cultural contexts and determine what is the expected, valued and allowed behaviour in women/girls and men/boys.

Gender bias: Actions or thoughts with prejudice, often against women, based on the gendered perception that women and men are not equal with respect to rights and dignity.

Gender discrimination: According to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Article 1, gender discrimination is “Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.” Discrimination can be contained in both law (de jure) and practice (de facto).

Gender division of labour: The way in which different tasks, jobs or types of work are allocated between women/girls and men/boys according to gender roles, norms, institutional rules and practices or what is otherwise considered as appropriate for each sex. It is not a static concept and can change over time.

Gender equality: The enjoyment of equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities across different sex categories in social, economic and political life. Gender equality does not mean that women and men are the same but means that women’s and men’s opportunities, rights and responsibilities do not depend upon whether they are born female or male. See also “Gender parity.”

Gender gap: Gap between women/girls and men/boys in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits in different domains of economic, social and political life in the society.

Gender mainstreaming: The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels.

Gender mainstreaming in trade policy: Ensuring that due consideration is given to gender inequalities and implications at every stage of the trade policy process, that is, the stages of (1) generating evidence to inform decisions on trade policy; (2) designing policies based on such evidence; and (3) supporting interventions on the ground to enable their successful implementation.

Gender-neutral: Policy, programme or situation that has no differential positive or negative impact in terms of gender relations or equality between women and men.

Gender norms and stereotypes: The accepted attributes and characteristics of being a woman or a man at a particular point in time for a specific society or community. They are used as standards and expectations to which women and men should conform and result in gender stereotypes

Gender-responsive: To identify and acknowledge existing differences and inequalities between women and men and articulate measures, policies or initiatives that address them.

Gender segregation: Differences in women’s and men’s representation in economic, social and political life (e.g. in the labour market, political participation, education). Gender segregation in employment

refers to the unequal distribution of men and women across occupations and functions – also known as occupational gender segregation.

Gender-sensitive: Understanding and taking account of the societal and cultural factors involved in gender-based exclusion and discrimination. Although it does not address inequality generated by unequal norms or roles, or propose remedial actions, gender sensitivity indicates gender awareness.

Global value chain (GVC): A global value chain is the set of different activities involving two or more countries that are needed to bring a product or service from conception through the intermediary phases of production, delivery to final consumers, and final disposal after use.

H

Horizontal segregation: A situation in which the workers of a specific economic sector or occupation are mostly made up of one particular sex. It is understood as under- or over-representation of women or men in occupations or sectors, not ordered by any criterion. For example, construction in many countries is a male occupation, whereas childcare is almost exclusively a female occupation. See also “Vertical segregation.”

I

Imperfect competition: A type of market structure depicting some but not all characteristics of perfectly competitive markets. It is characterized by the price-making behaviour of firms (i.e. firms holding market power to influence the price of the good they sell) that mostly sell heterogeneous products in a market setting with barriers to entry/exit. Monopolistic competition and oligopoly are the main examples of imperfectly competitive markets. See also “Perfect competition.”

Indicator: An indicator constitutes the evidence of the condition of an event, a process or an outcome. In the context used in the present study, gender indicators provide qualitative or quantitative information on the state of women’s rights and women-related issues.

Informal cross-border trade: Trade in legitimately produced goods and services that escapes the government regulatory framework, thereby avoiding certain taxes and regulations. See also “Cross-border trade.”

Informal economy: All economic activities undertaken by economic agents not covered by formal arrangements in law or in practice.

Informal employment: An employment relationship that is not subject, in law or in practice, to national labour legislation, income tax, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave, etc.).

L

Labour standards: International labour standards are legal instruments drawn up by the International Labour Organization setting out basic principles and rights at work. They are either Conventions, which are legally binding international treaties, or Recommendations, which serve as non-binding guidelines. In many cases, a Convention is accompanied by Recommendations that provide more detailed guidelines on how the Convention could be applied. Recommendations can also be autonomous, i.e. not linked to any Convention.

M

Market access: The conditions for the entry of goods into national or regional markets. From an exporter’s perspective, these conditions cover both tariff and non-tariff measures (e.g. quotas, subsidies, technical regulations, etc.), and the ease of market access depends on (i) the disadvantages or advantages that exporters face as compared to domestic producers; and (ii) the relative advantages or disadvantages that exporters have over other external competitors.

Market entry: The ability of producers to meet necessary requirements to enter a market. Market entry conditions may refer to standards for products involving quality, safety (e.g. use of pesticides or hormones), and authenticity (e.g. guarantee of geographical origin or use of a traditional production process). Other possible conditions are those related to the nature of the production process (e.g. with respect to workers’ health and safety, or environmental impact) as well as price and speed of delivery. Market entry conditions are not mandatory by law, but are usually imposed by large distribution networks and large commercial customers. Failure to satisfy market entry conditions would often result in de facto market exclusion.

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs): The World Bank defines MSMEs as follows: microenterprises, 1–9 employees; small enterprises, 10–49 employees; and medium-sized enterprises, 50–249 employees. However, the local definition of MSMEs may vary from country to country, and is based not only on number of employees, but also by

inclusion of other variables such as turnaround and assets. A significant proportion of MSMEs are women-owned/led.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted at the Millennium Summit on 8 September 2000 to shape the international development agenda for the 21st century, set out a series of time-bound targets that are known as the Millennium Development Goals. The deadline to meet the goals was 2015. The MDGs were succeeded by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). See also “Sustainable Development Goals.”

Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA): An international trade agreement that was introduced in 1974 and governed trade in textile and clothing through quotas negotiated bilaterally between developed and developing countries. This meant that selective quantitative restrictions were applied when surges in imports of particular products caused, or threatened to cause, serious damage to the industry of the importing country. On 1 January 1995, the MFA was replaced by the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing. See also “Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC)”.

N

Non-market activities: Production of goods and services that household members produce for their own consumption (e.g. subsistence agriculture) and/or reproductive activities such as unpaid domestic work (i.e. housework) and care work (i.e. care of children and elderly, ill and able-bodied adults). See also “Reproductive activities.”

Non-traditional agricultural exports (NTAEs): High-value, non-bulk agricultural commodities that either require special handling, such as fresh fruits, flowers and vegetables, or are processed in one or more post-harvest stages, such as specialty coffee, asparagus and honey, prior to reaching the end market.

O

Occupation: The kind of work performed in a job. The concept of occupation is defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as a “set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity.” The ILO classifies occupations under the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), which is intended, inter alia, for use in compiling statistics.

Occupational segregation: The separation of women and men into different occupations. It can reflect different opportunities available to female and male workers and can be useful to capture the rigidity of occupational hierarchies and “job ladders” for women.

Own-account worker: A self-employed individual who does not engage “employees” continuously and works on his/her own account or with one or more partners. Together with contributing family workers, own-account workers form the two categories of vulnerable employment, which is characterized by inadequate earnings (if paid), low productivity, and difficult working conditions that undermine workers’ fundamental rights.

P

Productive capacities: Productive resources, entrepreneurial capabilities and production linkages that together determine the capacity of a country to produce goods and/or services and generate employment. Productive capacity also determines the type and quantity of goods and services a country can export. Productive capacity is influenced by trade through, for example, economies of scale, more efficient use of resources, and acquisition of technology.

Productive activities: Activities that produce goods and services for exchange in the marketplace and therefore generate income.

R

Reproductive activities: Activities related to the reproduction of the current and future labour force. The reproductive sphere corresponds to the domestic realm and is associated with unpaid care work and household tasks, including childbearing and childrearing responsibilities, food preparation, housekeeping, and water and fuel collection, among other tasks. It is also referred to as “social reproduction,” implying that the reproductive sphere forms the basis of the productive sphere in the economy. Most of these tasks are carried out by women without being paid. They are not recorded in national accounts because standard economics considers them outside the realm of markets, an approach that is criticized by feminist economists.

S

Sex-disaggregated data (or gender-disaggregated data): Data collected and tabulated separately for women and men that allow for the measurement of differences between women and

men in various social and economic dimensions and are one of the requirements for obtaining gender statistics.

Skill level: Defines the complexity and range of tasks and duties to be performed in an occupation. It is measured by considering the nature of the work performed, the level of formal education required for a given occupation, and the amount of informal training and/or previous experience required to carry out the tasks and duties involved. The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) defines four skill levels that range from occupations involving simple and manual tasks and requiring basic literacy levels (low-skilled), to occupations involving complex problem-solving and decision-making for which high levels of education and training are required (high-skilled). The latest ISCO classification was introduced in 2008 and is known as ISCO-08.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): These are 17 goals with 169 targets set by the United Nations in 2015. All 193 United Nations Member States agreed to try to achieve the goals by 2030. The SDGs represent a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the environment and ensure the enjoyment of peace and prosperity by all people. The SDGs were preceded by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). See also “Millennium Development Goals.”

T

Terms of trade: The relative price, on world markets, of a country's exports compared to its imports.

Time use survey: A household survey that collects sex-disaggregated data on the amount of time spent on paid work, unpaid work, leisure time, and personal time by household members.

U

Unpaid work: It is classified by the 1993 United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA) into three categories: (i) housework, childcare and other family-related services not recognized by SNA as economic activity; (ii) subsistence and non-market activities, such as agricultural production for household consumption and imputed rent of own-occupied dwellings; and (iii) household enterprises producing for the market for which more than one household member provides unpaid labour. Unpaid work is mostly performed by women in the household without any remuneration in return.

V

Value-added: The difference between the value of output (or total sales revenue) and the value of intermediate consumption (or total cost of components, materials and services purchased from other firms) made by an individual producer, sector or industry during a reporting period (usually a year). It is considered a measure of the contribution of a producer, sector or industry to GDP and describes the value being generated in the production process. Economic sectors can be grouped as high-value-added or low-value-added depending on the level of value added they generate.

Vertical segregation: A situation in which people do not get jobs above a particular rank in organizations because of their race, age, sex, etc. Vertical segregation means that opportunities for career progression within a company or sector for a particular group of people are restricted. In the literature, vertical gender segregation is also referred to as the “glass ceiling effect,” which indicates the existence of visible and/or invisible barriers that prevent women's ascent to higher-level positions.

Vocational training: Education and training aimed at providing workers with specific professional skills to perform successfully in each occupation.

W

Women's economic empowerment: Women's ability to fully and equally enjoy their economic rights and entitlements. It refers to both the ability to economically succeed and advance and the power to make economic decisions and act on them. It covers a wide range of areas including access to employment and good working conditions, equal pay for equal work, access to training, information and technology, access to markets and control over economic resources, and the ability to influence economic decision-making, including the formulation of financial, monetary, commercial and other economic policies. See also “Women's empowerment.”

Women's empowerment: The process of enabling women to participate fully in economic, social and political life, and ensuring that they have a sense of self-worth, can exercise their right to make independent choices, have access to opportunities and resources, have control over their own lives both within and outside the domestic sphere, and have the ability to influence the direction of social change both at the national and international levels. See also “Women's economic empowerment.”

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