



Online course on trade and gender linkages: critical minerals from a gender perspective

30 September to 15 November

PROSPECTUS

Background

Trade can play an important role in supporting countries' efforts to achieve economic growth and sustainable development. It can also contribute to women's economic empowerment and gender equality by expanding women's participation in the economy, reducing inequalities and increasing women's access to skills and education. However, trade is not gender-neutral. Because women and men participate differently in the economy, they are affected differently by changes in trade. Understanding these differentiated impacts is essential for designing trade agreements and policies that promote inclusive and equitable development.

The global energy and digital transitions have brought new dimensions to the trade and gender agenda. Demand for critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, copper, nickel and rare earth elements, has increased rapidly because these minerals are essential inputs for renewable-energy technologies, electric vehicles, batteries and digital infrastructure. Critical minerals have therefore become central to international trade, industrial policy and global value chains.

For many resource-rich developing countries, growing demand presents opportunities to expand mineral exports, attract investment, increase domestic value addition and create new employment opportunities. Governments are increasingly adopting trade and industrial policies to strengthen domestic mineral value chains and capture a greater share of the value generated by their mineral resources.

These developments also raise important gender considerations. Mining remains one of the most gender-segregated sectors of the economy, and women continue to face barriers to employment, entrepreneurship and leadership positions. Beyond employment, the expansion of mining and mineral trade can generate broader economic, social and environmental impacts that affect women and men differently. Trade and mineral policies therefore influence how the opportunities and challenges associated with expanding mineral production and trade are distributed across society. Integrating a gender perspective into these policies can help ensure that the benefits of the critical-minerals boom are shared more equitably and contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

While considerable attention has been devoted to gender equality in mining and, separately, to the relationship between trade and gender, relatively little attention has been paid to the intersection of trade, gender and critical minerals. In response to this emerging policy challenge, UNCTAD has developed this online course. It provides participants with the conceptual foundations, analytical tools and policy perspectives needed to understand how trade, mineral value chains and gender interact, and explores how trade and mineral policies can promote more inclusive and equitable participation in the critical-minerals economy.

The course will be offered in English over a period of approximately six weeks, from 30 September to 15 November.

The course is open primarily to stakeholders from developing countries and the least developed countries, with a limited number of places available to stakeholders from developed countries. It is part of the UNCTAD portfolio of online courses on trade and gender and will be managed and tutored by the Trade, Gender and



Development Programme of the Division on International Trade and Commodities, with contributions from relevant UNCTAD experts.

Objective

The objective of the course is to provide participants with the knowledge needed to analyse the interactions between trade, gender and critical minerals, understand the differentiated impacts of mineral trade and mining expansion on women and men, and develop gender-responsive policy recommendations for more inclusive development.

The course combines conceptual foundations with empirical evidence and policy analysis. It examines recent developments in global mineral markets and value chains, discusses women's participation and experiences across mining economies, analyses the gender implications of mineral trade policies and trade agreements, and explores policy options for integrating gender considerations into mineral governance.

Upon completion of the course, participants should be able to:

- Understand the relationship between trade, gender and critical minerals from a development perspective;
- Be familiar with recent trends in global demand, production, trade and value chains for critical minerals;
- Identify the different roles women occupy across mineral value chains and the barriers and opportunities they face;
- Explain how mineral trade and mining affect women and men differently;
- Understand the gender implications of different mineral trade and industrial policies;
- Be familiar with recent developments in gender-responsive trade policymaking and gender-related provisions in trade agreements;
- Assess the extent to which trade agreements and mineral policies integrate gender considerations;
- Use the knowledge acquired to develop policy-oriented research and formulate gender-responsive recommendations for trade and mineral policymaking.

Target audience and prerequisites

The course is targeted to policymakers and government officials, academics from universities and research centres and representatives of civil society in developing countries and the least developed countries involved in policy formulation and implementation, research, teaching, advocacy or field work related to trade, gender, mining and mineral resources, industrial development, investment, energy, environment or sustainable development. The number of participants is limited in order to ensure appropriate support throughout the course.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Hold an advanced degree in economics, law, political science, international relations, gender studies, development studies, mining or natural-resource governance, or related areas;
- Possess excellent knowledge of the English language.

To successfully complete the course activities, participants should plan to devote approximately 10–12 hours per week to the course.

Fees

Selected participants will be exempt from fees associated with access to the course and the online tutoring services provided.

Certificate of completion

Participants with passing grades in the course will receive a certificate of completion. Outstanding participants will also receive a distinction letter.

Application process and deadline

Interested candidates should apply by following the instructions at [Online course Trade and Gender with a focus on Critical Minerals – Fill out form](#)

Applications **must include a detailed curriculum vitae and a letter of nomination** from the applicant's institution indicating its support for the application and explaining how the applicant's participation in the course will contribute to their future work and the work of the institution.

The deadline for applications is **15 September**. Incomplete applications or applications received after that date will not be considered. For assistance with the online application process, please contact elarningtrade@un.org.

A selection committee will review each application and select course participants based on the supporting documents and the relevance of the course to their work.

Participants will be advised of their selection by 24 September.

For further information or clarification about the course, please contact elarningtrade@un.org.

Annex: Content and timetable

The course is divided into five parts, each addressing a distinct dimension of the relationship between trade, gender and critical minerals.

If the linkages between Trade and Gender are new to you, the course also provides materials and references to improve your understanding of the linkages of trade and gender.

Each part includes the following:

- Multimedia materials;
- Suggested readings on the issues covered by the course;

To successfully complete the course, participants will be requested to complete the required assessments, including quizzes and multiple-choice tests.

An Internet connection is required to access the course materials, participate in online discussions, interact with the course tutor and other participants and complete the assessments.

The course is structured as follows:

Date	Title	Content
Week 1	Part 1 Gender, trade and critical minerals: why this matters now	• The two-way relationship between trade and gender from a development perspective; • Critical minerals in the global energy and digital transitions; • Opportunities and risks for resource-rich developing countries; • Why gender matters for mineral production, trade and value chains.
Week 2	Part 2 Trends in mining, mineral trade and supply chains	• Recent trends in global demand, production and trade for lithium, cobalt, copper, nickel, rare earth elements and other critical minerals; • The structure and geography of critical-mineral value chains; • Investment, processing, value addition and industrial development; • Key trade, market and governance developments.
Week 3	Part 3 Challenges and opportunities for women in mining economies	• Women's roles across large-scale mining, artisanal and small-scale mining and related value chains; • Barriers to employment, entrepreneurship, skills development and leadership; • Gender-differentiated economic, social, occupational-safety and environmental impacts; • Policy and industry practices that can support women's participation and economic empowerment.

Date	Title	Content
Week 4	Part 4 Mineral trade from a gender perspective	• How mineral production and trade affect women and men through employment, income, livelihoods, prices and public revenues; • Gender implications of mineral trade, investment and industrial policies; • Distributional impacts of value-chain upgrading and domestic value addition; • Tools for gender-responsive analysis of mineral trade policies.
Week 5	Part 5 Towards gender-responsive mineral trade agreements and policies	• Recent developments in gender-responsive trade policymaking; • Gender-related provisions in trade agreements and their relevance to mineral value chains; • Gender impact assessments and policy coherence across trade, industry, mining, investment, environmental and social policies; • Formulation of gender-responsive recommendations and final course assessment.