Digitalization and AI-Powered Transparency on Trade-Related Regulations for Gender-Sensitive Policymaking in Africa

GAIN (Gender-AI-NTM) Project Overview

GAIN Project Start-up meeting
15 October 2026, Windhoek, Namibia

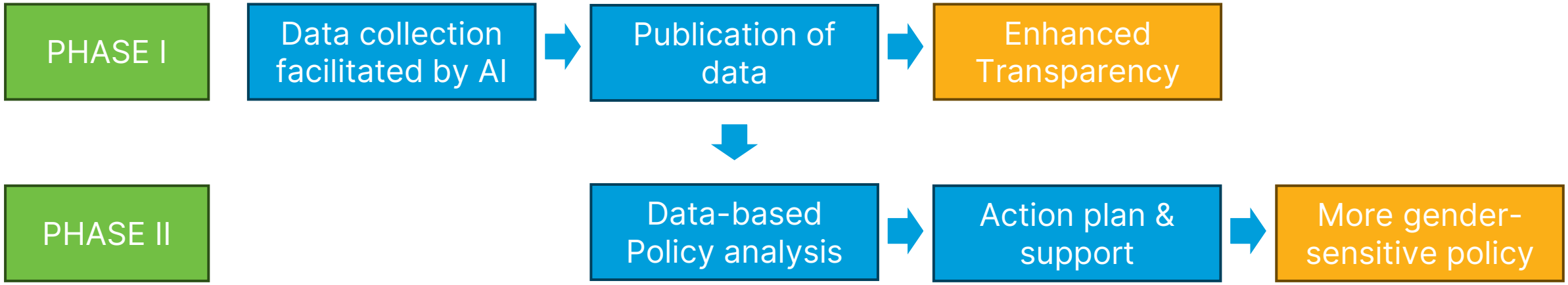
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Gender-AI-NTM project

- To improve transparency on trade-related regulations including non-tariff measures (NTMs), with digitalization and AI to better develop gender-sensitive trade policies
- The Gambia, Kenya, Namibia, Zambia
- 2026-2029 (4 years)



What are Non-Tariff Measures: examples



Exporting agri products

- Coffee beans: Residues of ochratoxin A should be lower than 5.0 (µg/kg)
- Virgin coconut oil: Label need to have a "best before date"
- Voluntary sustainability standards → not NTMs



Importing cars

- Motor vehicles: Emission levels of hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides should be lower than 0.024 (g/km) and 0.009 (g/km).
- Electric vehicles: Battery should pass a safety test.

Why transparency?

- For businesses and traders. Transparency *itself* can cut costs of NTMs by approx. 20% (Cadot and Gourdon, 2016).
- Constitution and statutory mandates
- Obligation under the WTO, AfCFTA and other trade agreements

Each State Party shall promptly publish or make publicly available (...) its laws, regulations, procedures (...) relating to any trade matter (...) [AfCFTAA Art. 16]

-> Resource challenges, Lags, Sustainability

Why gender?

- Gender equality is essential for sustainable development.

Adopt and strengthen (...) policies and (...) legislation for (...) gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (...) [SDG 5.C]



What has UNCTAD done?

- For **transparency**, collect and publish trade-related regulations including NTMs.
- Collection w/ gov’ts through **TRAINS Data Entry Tool**
- Publication for the public through **TRAINS Online**
- Research and analysis, policy support, and capacity building activities for various topics including **gender**, climate change, etc.

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-> Increase efficiency with AI and support national portals

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What will the GAIN project do?

PHASE I

1. Start-up meetings
2. AI development
3. Online courses, User guidelines
4. Training of officials on the TRAINS data entry tool
5. Data collection with the officials
6. Data publication in national portals and TRAINS Online
7. Training of traders on TRAINS Online

PHASE II

1. Initial NTM review from the gender perspective
2. 1st multistakeholder consultation
3. National report
4. 2nd multistakeholder consultation
5. Action plan (and its implementation)

* Existing online course

How will the GAIN project be implemented?

- Collaboration with
- Ministry of International Relations and Trade as a focal point

- UN ECA
- UN ESCAP
- UNRCO and UNCT

Thank you

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