



Transformative actions to advance women's economic empowerment:

UNCTAD Trade and Gender Toolbox and the Outcome of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel (UNSG HLP) on Women's Economic Empowerment

*Side event organized by UNCTAD and the UN High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (UNHLP)
within the 65th executive session of the Trade and Development Board,
11 September 2017, 1.15 pm -2.45 pm, Palais des Nations, room XXVI*

The event will provide the opportunity for UNCTAD and UNSG HLP to present instruments that contribute to accelerate women's equal participation in the economy and in trade. Closing gender gaps in the economic domain will not only advance women's economic empowerment but also support progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

UNCTAD Trade and Gender Toolbox is the first attempt to provide a systematic framework to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on women's wellbeing and gender equality, prior to their implementation. The toolbox helps answering the question, "What would happen to women if a given trade policy were implemented?"

UNCTAD has successfully tested the trade and gender toolbox methodology in a specific trade agreement - the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the European Union (EU) and the East African Community (EAC) to assess the likely impact of the EPA on the wellbeing and gender equality of women in Kenya, one of EAC partner states. The same methodology can be used to assess the gender impacts of any other trade reform in any other country. This innovative instrument, sponsored by the Government of Sweden, contributes to ensure that trade plays its role as a tool for inclusive development and for the economic empowerment of women.

The UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Women's Economic Empowerment, which was established in January 2016 and completed its mandate earlier this year, has in its two reports explored seven drivers of change to address systemic barriers to women's economic empowerment: Tackling adverse norms; Ensuring legal protections and reforming discriminatory laws; Recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid work and care; Building assets – digital, financial and property; Changing business culture and practice; Improving public sector practices and procurement; and Strengthening visibility, collective voice and representation. Besides the seven drivers, the UNSG HLP has also highlighted macroeconomic policies as crucial enablers of women's economic empowerment.

The UNSG HLP has presented recommendations for transformative actions necessary to advance women's economic empowerment under each of the seven drivers and these recommendations have furthermore been supported by the development of toolkits for each of these drivers to help interested partners in fast-track action.

The resources that will be presented at the side-event are meant to leverage macroeconomic policies to benefit women's economic empowerment and to contribute to sharing knowledge and understanding on the nexus between gender equality and inclusive growth. This is essential for lasting changes.

Programme

- Opening remarks by Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD or by Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD
- Presentation of UNCTAD Trade and Gender Toolbox by Ms. Simonetta Zarrilli, Chief, Trade, Gender and Development Programme, Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, UNCTAD
- Presentation of the recommendations, reports and toolkits of the UNSG HLP by Ms. Simona Scarpaleggia, CEO IKEA Switzerland and UNSG HLP Co-Chair
- Closing remarks and moderation by H.E. Daniel Blockert, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the World Trade Organization

A light lunch will be served in front of room XXVI from 1 pm, ahead of the 1:15 pm start time of the event.