

# Trade, Gender and Development Programme



**Advocating Inclusive and  
Gender-Responsive Economic  
Development on a Global Level**



# OUR WORK



Through its Trade, Gender and Development Programme, UNCTAD helps its member States:

Assess the distinct effect of economic policies, and especially trade policy, on men and women, and boys and girls.



Identify gender-based constraints that impede inclusive development and devise strategies and policy measures to overcome them.

Strengthen their capacity to mainstream gender into trade policy formulation and implementation, and in negotiations of trade and other agreements at the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels.



## BRIDGETOWN COVENANT

### THE NEW MANDATE ON GENDER

The Bridgetown Covenant, adopted at the 15th session of UNCTAD's Ministerial Conference (Barbados, 3-7 October 2021), recognizes that existing gender inequalities have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the consequent risk of reversing the progress of recent decades in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. It calls on UNCTAD to continue mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in its work, including through its activities on the links between trade and gender and by supporting member States in setting up policies and institutions that support women's economic empowerment, economic security and rights.



**UNCTAD** 15  
BARBADOS  
3-7 October 2021

# LESSONS LEARNED



UNCTAD's analytical work finds that, despite differences in economic structure and development levels, a number of overarching issues and specific patterns common to several low-income economies can be singled out with regard to women's equality and empowerment:

## **EFFECTS OF TRADE ON WOMEN**

The effects of trade on men and women are not clear-cut, and impacts are often double-edged. In other words, women may simultaneously gain and lose from trade. For example, trade may bring women more stable wage employment, but women may still be segregated in low-skill and low-pay jobs.

## **GENDER IN TRADE POLICIES**

Steps taken at the international and regional levels to ensure gender equality often do not translate to national and regional levels. When they do, the institutions in charge of ensuring their implementation tend to be under-staffed, with limited budgets and insufficient political influence.

## **SOCIAL BARRIERS**

Despite *de jure* equality between women and men being enshrined in the laws of many countries, customary practices, gender biases and discriminatory social norms are still preventing the realization of *de facto* equality.

## **WOMEN AT WORK**

Gender segregation across sectors and occupations persists, and women tend to be concentrated in subsistence agriculture, low-value-added nodes of the manufacturing sector and low-productivity services.

## **FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT**

Gender gaps in access and control over economic and financial resources, coupled with women's burden of domestic care and household-related responsibilities, perpetuate labour market segregation, constrain women's productivity and hold back women's economic empowerment.

# RESEARCH ON TRADE, GENDER & DEVELOPMENT



## Studies

Some examples of the Trade, Gender and Development Programme's research work are presented below:



Trade and Gender Linkages:  
Analysis of Least-Developed  
Countries (LDCs)

BORDERLINE: Women in Informal  
Cross-Border Trade in Malawi, the  
United Republic of Tanzania and  
Zambia



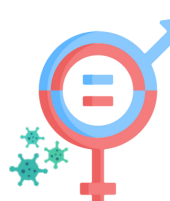
International Trade, Transparency,  
and Gender Equality: The Case of  
the PACER Plus

Trade and Gender Nexus in the  
Context of Regional Integration: A  
Comparative Assessment of the EAC  
and MERCOSUR



East African Community Regional  
Integration: Trade and Gender  
Implications

## Policy Briefs



COVID-19  
Threatens Four  
"Lost Decades"  
for Gender  
Equality



Gender and  
Unemployment:  
Lessons from the  
COVID-19  
Pandemic



International  
Trade Is at Risk  
of Leaving  
Women Behind

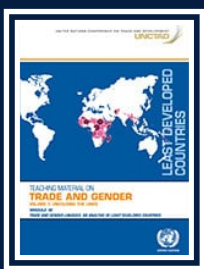


Trade Deals Can  
Be a Tool for  
Women's  
Empowerment

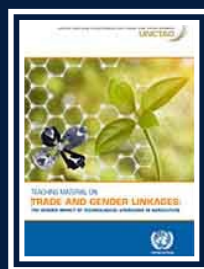
# ONLINE COURSES



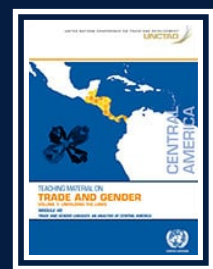
The Trade, Gender and Development Programme's research provides the basis for a portfolio of online courses on trade and gender. The courses have proved to be an effective tool to bridge knowledge gaps and reach out to stakeholders in over 150 countries.



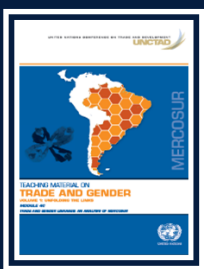
Least-Developed Countries



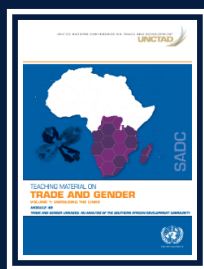
Gender Impact of Technological Upgrading in Agriculture



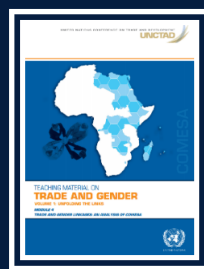
Central America



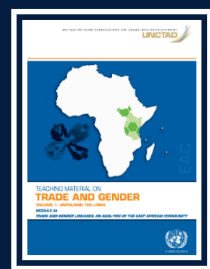
Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR)



Southern African Development Community (SADC)

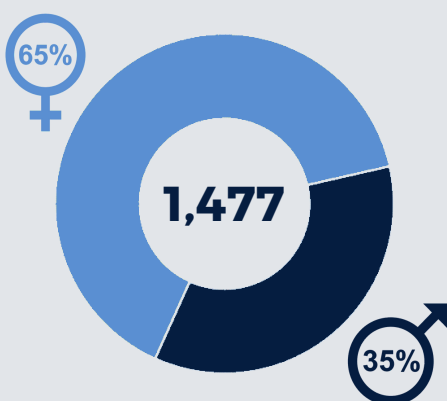


Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)



East African Community (EAC)

## REACH



A total of 1,477 stakeholders, including 956 women and 521 men mainly from developing and least-developed countries, have benefited from this initiative. Between 2015 and 2021, 16 sessions of the online course have been delivered in English, French and Spanish.

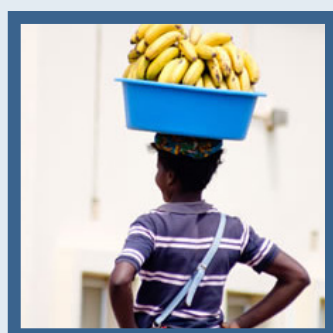
# WORKSHOPS

The Trade, Gender and Development Programme actively promotes policy dialogue to facilitate a better understanding of the links between trade and gender.

As part of the analytical activities, national workshops are conducted to sensitize local policymaking about the gender ramifications of trade and disseminate the findings of the analytical work among relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, representatives from intergovernmental organizations, civil society and academia.



# Women in Small-scale and Informal Cross-border Trade



Since 2016, UNCTAD has been working with women small-scale and informal cross-border traders in Kenya, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

Activities aim to tackle some of the gender-specific obstacles faced by cross-border traders, promote awareness of trade rules and procedures, and strengthen traders' entrepreneurial skills and resilience to recover from the COVID-19 crisis. Nearly 400 cross-border traders were trained during 2019-2021, most of whom were women.

## ADVOCACY

The Trade, Gender and Development Programme is at the forefront of the global debate on gender. It engages in awareness-raising activities about the trade and gender nexus and advocates for gender-responsive policymaking. Below are the main frameworks with which the programme has been involved:



Commission on the Status of Women



UNCTAD Ministerial Conferences



UNCTAD Trade and Development Commission



Gender and Development Forum  
26-28 September 2021



WTO Ministerial Conference  
WTO Public Forum

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## Trade, Gender and Development Programme

### Division on International Trade and Commodities

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