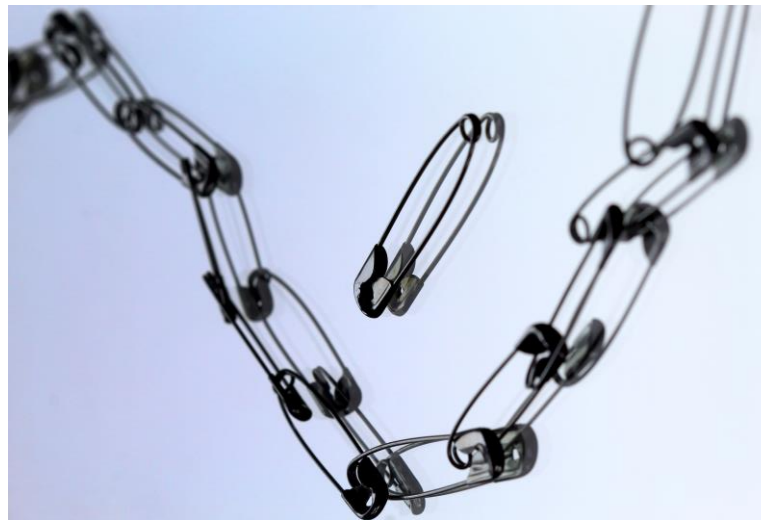




New Instruments, Approaches and Frameworks in Trade Policy Towards Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

Tuesday 13 October 2020



Delivered by the Division on International Trade and Commodities

UNCTAD



Overview of the short course

- The gender impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- The trade and gender nexus
- New instruments and approaches
- UNCTAD's initiatives and findings on trade & gender
- New partnerships and plans



The Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women and the Role of Trade

Session 1

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Why are women hit more than men?

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis is not gender neutral, as it affects men and women differently. [6 reasons may explain why](#) :

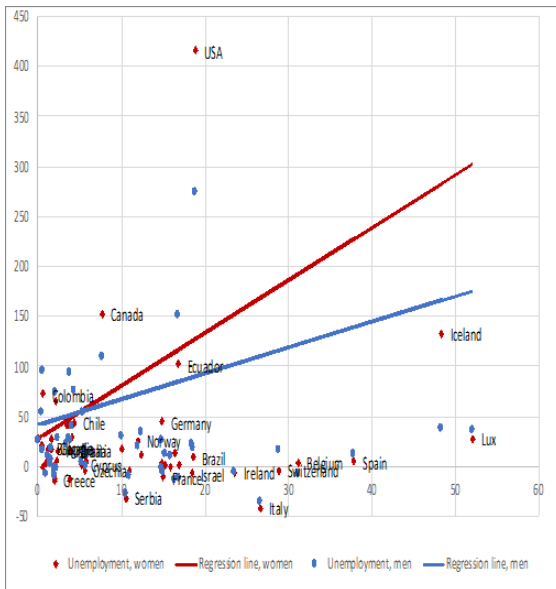
1. TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT

Women are more likely to lose their jobs than men → Across the world, women represent less than 40% of total employment but make up 57% of those working on a part-time basis.

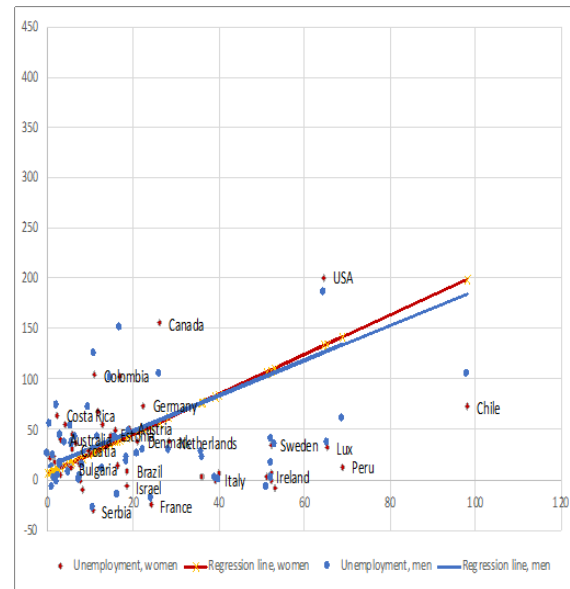
- Under the economic stress deriving from COVID-19, enterprises are inclined to first lay off workers in low-skilled, casual, seasonal and informal jobs while keeping those in high-skilled or permanent positions



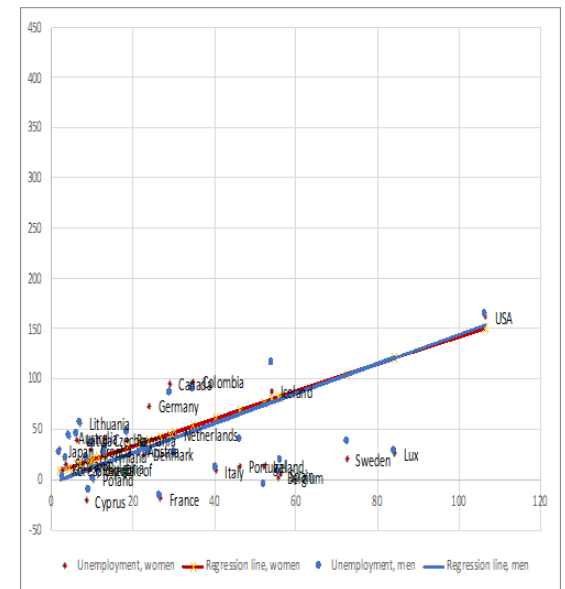
The effects of the pandemic are not gender neutral – regressing unemployment versus Covid-19 prevalence



April



June



July

Y-axis: y-y unemployment growth
 X-axis: Covid-19 prevalence per 100M



2. INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT

- Over 740 million women worldwide work in the informal sector
- In many developing countries, women are either self-employed or work as contributing family workers
- In South Asia, over 80% of women in non-agricultural jobs are in informal employment; in sub-Saharan Africa this figure is 74% and in LAC 54%
- Informality means that workers are not entitled to social protection → health insurance, paid sick and maternity leave, pensions and unemployment benefits
 - > the income of women working in the informal economy fell by around 60% during the first months of the pandemic



3. Female-dominate sectors

- Female-dominated sectors have been among the hardest hit by social distancing measures and travel restrictions → tourism, hospitality, retail trade
- 55% of women are employed in the services sector versus 44% of men



An example:

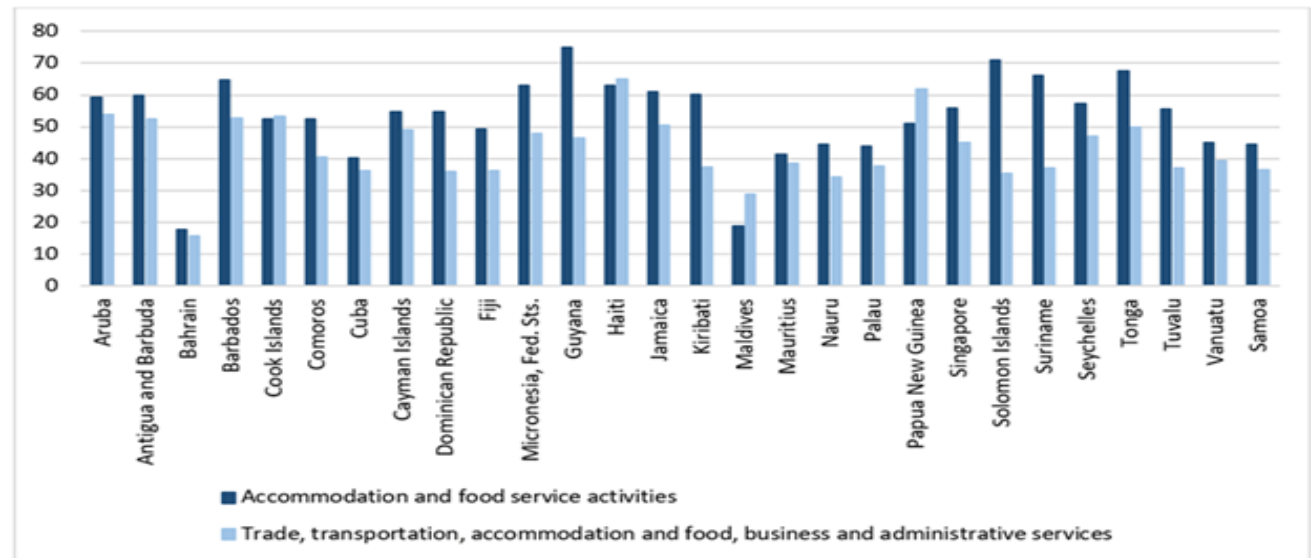
Women make up the bulk of mainly low-skilled workers in the tourism industry in small island developing states (SIDS)



- During the first quarter of 2020 \$80 billion were lost in export revenues from tourism
- Women constitute more than half of those employed in the accommodation and food services sectors in 20 out of 28 SIDS for which data are available

The impact of COVID-19 on women working in the tourism industry in SIDS is disproportionate

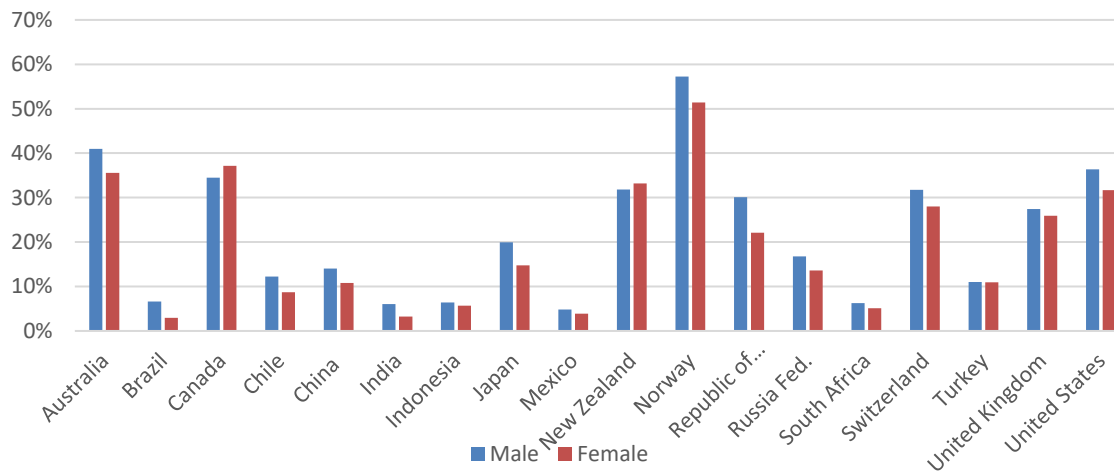
Female share of total employment in the selected sectors in SIDS (% share)



4. FEMALE MSMEs AND ACCESS TO CREDIT

- MSMEs constitute the backbone of the global economy accounting for over 2/3 of employment globally and for 80-90% of employment in low-income countries 1/3 of formal MSMEs are fully or partially owned by women
- Female-led MSMEs have reported higher rates of lay-offs and less resources to sustain their business than male-led MSMEs
- MSMEs in the Asia-Pacific are fairing better than MSMEs in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of operation capacity and revenue loss
- Women entrepreneurs are often discriminated against when attempting to access credit → access to credit is of paramount importance for the survival of firms

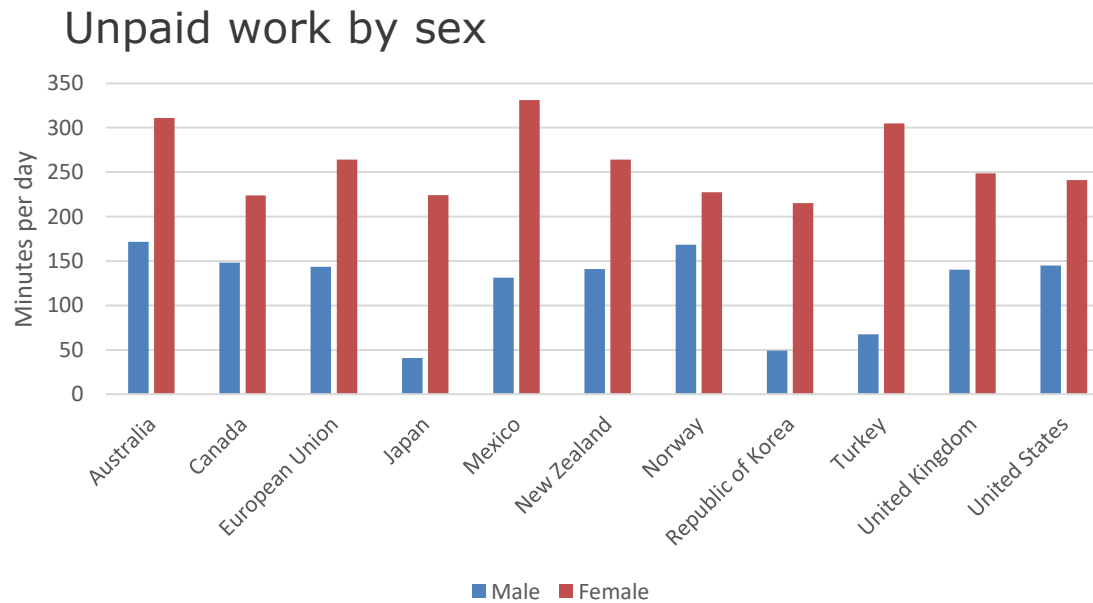
Access to credit (as % of entrepreneurs by sex)





5. UNPAID CARE WORK

- The COVID-19 pandemic has increased women's unpaid care work
- Some women may be forced to make difficult decisions to leave the labor market or opt for part-time jobs





6. GENDER-BASED AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Lockdown and isolation policies, coupled with the financial stress that families and individuals are experiencing, exacerbate domestic violence
- 25% surge in domestic violence cases
- GBV has an economic cost; it is estimated that it costs countries between 1,2% and 3,7% of GDP in terms of losses in productivity
- During emergencies situation other forms of GBV have a tendency to proliferate



Analogies between the current global health crisis and former ones

- In the aftermaths of the 2004 tsunami, surviving men outnumbered women in provinces in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and India
- During the late 1990's Asian financial crisis, women were laid off seven times the rate of men
- Post 2008 global crisis, support measures were provided to sectors that mainly employed men

Women and girls bear a disproportionated burden during crisis and the COVID 19 pandemic makes no exception to it

Countries' responses

- Monetary & macro-financial measures
 - Fiscal measures
 - Measures related to exchange rate and balance of payments
- Most national response measures have not targeted women explicitly:
- 20% of countries analyzed have no gender-sensitive measures (42 countries)
 - 25 countries have provided a holistic response
 - Only 10% of rescue measures across 85 countries are aimed at strengthening women's economic security
 - 71% of measures focus on violence against women and girls



But women can indirectly benefit from measures supporting:

- Informal sector
- Female-intensive sectors
- MSEMs



Building Back Better

Rescue measure are time-bound and will cease to exist once the emergency is over

- To avoid going back to “business as usual” and conversely “building back better” systemic changes are needed and should be guided by:



Three key domains:

1) Human Capital

- Improved education and training opportunities, assessment of labor markets demand and good match with women's skills, STEM studies

2) Access to resources and opportunities

- Extending safety nets beyond emergency time, expanding emergency relief packages, extending financial services, access to public procurement, access to social services, foster women's participation in decision-making

3) Security

- Enact or strengthen national legislations against GBV and enhance capacity to monitor and report on GBV



Building back better through trade

- Ex-ante and ex-post gender assessments of trade reforms
- Strengthen data collection
- Formulate gender- responsive trade policies
- Overall policy coherence



New Instruments, Approaches and Frameworks in Trade Policy Towards Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

Linkages Between Trade and Gender and The Role of Trade Policy

Session 2

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What has changed in recent years?

- The trade community has overcome the approach "*trade is gender neutral*" and is aware that trade has different impacts on women and men, and gender inequality has an impact on trade performance
- Many countries believe that trade policy can be used as a tool to empower women. This would be a precondition for long-lasting development



1. Gender → Trade

Gender-based inequalities affect trade outcomes and performance:

- Gender inequality as a growth strategy in export industries: female workers hired to cut labour costs due to lower wages;
- Gender inequality as a burden on countries' competitiveness: holds back women's productivity and their entrepreneurial potential, indirectly hindering trade performance





2. Trade → Gender

Changes in the structure of production

Changes in the price of goods and services

Reduction in tariff revenues

Trade may impact women in the various dimensions of their lives:

Wage workers

Producers

Consumers
- imported products
- public services



How to make trade policy more gender-responsive?

Mainstreaming
gender in trade policy

Generate relevant evidence to inform trade policy

Design policies based on such evidence

Support interventions on the ground

Some ways in which gender mainstreaming is occurring

1. Improve the
availability of
data and
statistics

2. Conducting ex-
ante and ex-post
gender impact
assessment of
trade reforms

3. Including
gender
considerations
in trade
agreements

4. Creating
global
awareness



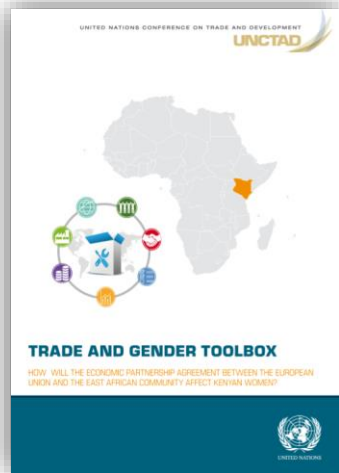
1. Improve the availability of data and statistics

- Gender statistics essential for identifying gaps between men and women and key challenges and opportunities including in trade
- Around 80% of countries regularly produce sex-disaggregated statistics on health/mortality, labour force participation, education and training, political participation
- Less than 30% of countries produce sex-disaggregated statistics on informal employment, entrepreneurship (ownership & management) and unpaid work

UNCTAD project with ECA and ECE on “Data and statistics for more gender-responsive trade policies in Africa, the Caucasus and Central Asia”: Outcomes:

- Increased capacity of national statistical authorities, policy makers and other trade stakeholders to develop a conceptual framework that would address data needs on trade and gender
- Increased capacity of national statistical authorities to collate and disseminate data and statistics for policy makers for more gender-responsive trade policy

2. Conducting ex-ante and ex-post gender impact assessment of trade reforms



- **Trade and Gender toolbox:** framework to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on gender equality prior to their implementation
- It provides a checklist for guiding implementation of accompanying measures to mitigate the possible negative effects on women or, conversely, to foster the benefits for them



The methodology has been adopted by the European Commission for assessing the potential gender impact of trade agreements under negotiation within the Sustainable Impact Assessment (SIA)

3. Including gender considerations in trade agreements

“New Generation Agreements”

- Trade and gender chapters of the **Chile-Uruguay FTA (2016)**, the modernized **Canada-Chile FTA (2017)**, **Canada-Argentina FTA (2017)** and the **Canada-Israel FTA (2018)**
 - Recognise the importance of gender mainstreaming for achieving inclusive economic growth
 - Provisions for cooperation (e.g. skills enhancement, financial inclusion, agency and leadership, entrepreneurship, technology and innovation)
- 2018 EU Parliament resolution to include gender in trade agreements (e.g. **Chile-EC**, **EU-Mercosur**, and **EU-Australia** trade agreements)
- Gender chapters are a first step towards increasing the visibility of gender issues in trade agreements. Next steps could include:
 - Making the chapters bolder (e.g. setting specific gender-related goals; establishing procedures to monitor implementation etc)
 - Ensuring that the goals of the trade and gender chapters are supported – and not undermined – by the other chapters of the agreement



4. Global Awareness and Action





Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment

- Launched at MC11 in Buenos Aires it has now 127 signatories
- Acknowledges that:
 - I. inclusive trade policies contribute to advancing GEWE, which has a positive impact on economic growth
 - II. there's need to develop evidence-based interventions that address the range of barriers that limit opportunities for women in the economy
- A series of seminars organized to support the implementation of the Declaration
- On 23 September 2020, a group of WTO members agreed to establish an Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender



Trade Impact Group (IGC)

- Multi-stakeholder network within IGC - Permanent Missions, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, and academic research centres

International Gender Champions

- Leadership network of decision-makers committed to gender equality in their spheres of influence (launched in July 2015)
- 250 active Champions - heads of International Organizations, Permanent Missions, and organizations from the civil society



A need for policy coherence

- Trade policy is one of the policies that a country can use to achieve gender equality.
- Trade policy needs to be coordinated with and supported by other policies - labour, education, social. E.g. Key enablers of gender equality:
 - education and skills
 - access to productive resources
 - Non- discriminatory legal frameworks
 - Adequate childcare systems



UNCTAD's Initiatives and Findings on Trade and Gender

Sessions 3

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Our projects

Publications

Several studies have been published to serve as support to Member States to understand the gender implications of trade policy and provide policy recommendations

Nine country studies

- Angola
- Bhutan
- Cape Verde
- the Gambia
- Lesotho
- Rwanda
- Uruguay
- Myanmar
- Kiribati

Five regional studies:

- EAC
- SADC
- COMESA
- MERCOSUR
- Pacific Islands
- Central America

Thematic studies:

- Technology in Agriculture
- Trade and Gender Toolbox



Online Courses on Trade and Gender



Standard courses

Regional courses

- COMESA
- EAC
- SADC
- MERCOSUR
- Central America

Topical courses

- Technology in Agriculture

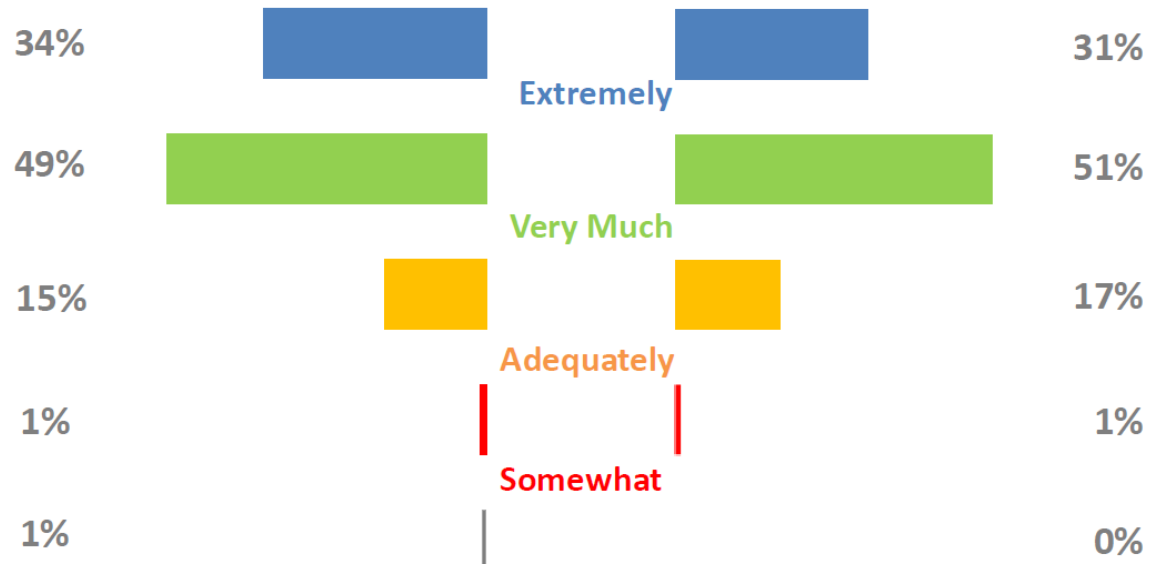
e- Learning Platform on Trade

- 12 online courses since 2015 (English, French and Spanish)
- 1200 participants from all regions of the world
- 65% of women and 35% of men
- From 130 countries

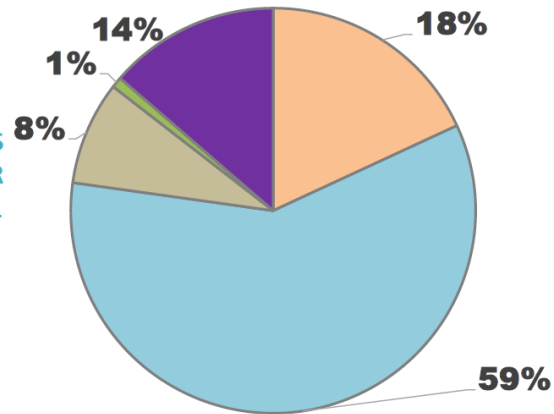


HOW SUCCESSFUL THE COURSE
WAS IN ENHANCING THE
UNDERSTANDING OF THE TWO-
WAY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
TRADE AND GENDER:

HOW SUCCESSFUL THE COURSE
WAS IN EXPLAINING HOW TO
EXAMINE THE GENDER PROFILE OF
AN ECONOMY:

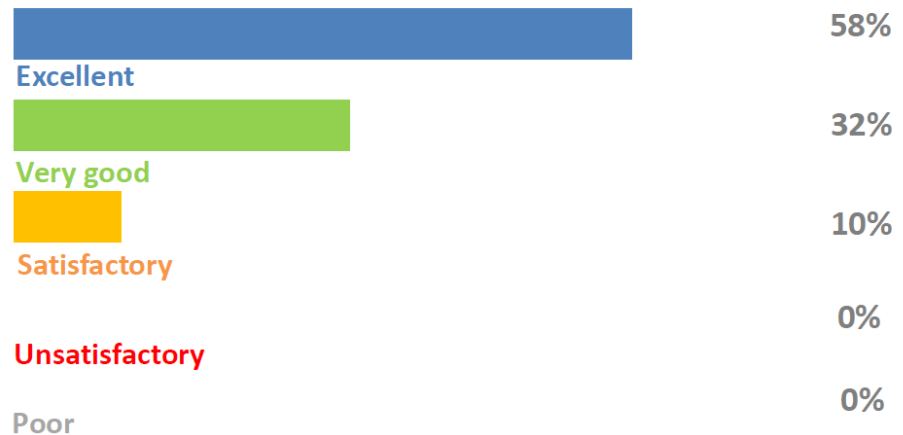


HOW PARTICIPANTS WHOSE PRIMARY ROLE IS THAT OF A POLICYMAKER OR POLICY ADVISOR FEEL AFTER COMPLETING THE COURSE:



- Are ready to design and/or implement gender-sensitive trade policy in their own country
- Can assist policymakers in their own country to mainstream gender in trade policy formulation and implementation
- Don't feel quite ready to integrate trade and gender considerations in their work just yet, but are motivated to pursue this goal
- Have decided that they do not wish to provide policy advice in this area
- Not applicable

GLOBALLY, THIS COURSE WAS RATED AS:





Why considering taking the online courses?

- 1) With six years of experience in delivering online courses, we are in the best position to offer high-quality courses to interested participants
- 2) The course provides you with the theoretical and practical knowledge to make national/regional trade policies more gender-responsive. A critical knowledge at present when several countries are exploring the possibility to use trade policy towards gender equality and women's economic empowerment
- 3) Distance learning has never been so important and relevant
- 4) It supports the shift towards egalitarian transformations to the benefit of women and advancing the SDGs agenda

The project has benefitted from the outset from the support of the Government of Finland. It is growing and has attracted support from several institutions, e.g. the COMESA Secretariat, TradeMark East Africa and the EIF



4 years Project

Women in Informal Cross-border Trade in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia





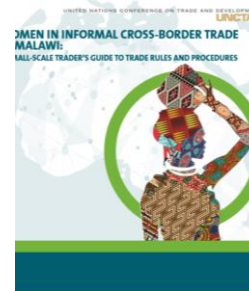
Analytical component

“Borderline: Women in Informal Cross-border Trade in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia”



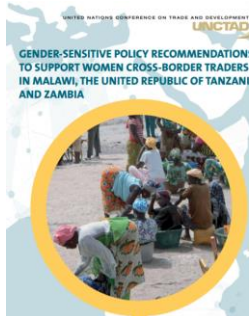
Capacity building component

- Traders’ guides to trade rules and procedures
- Training workshops on cross-border trade and entrepreneurship (November-December 2019)



Policy dialogue

- Advocacy document
- Regional workshop held in Dar es Salaam (Dec 2019)





Training Workshops on Cross-border trade and entrepreneurship

- 6-day training workshop at 5 border crossings
- 1 day interactive session between border authorities and traders to encourage mutual understanding
- 150 women informal and small-scale traders trained
- 96% of participants who have not formalized yet think they will formalize within next 12 months
- Most participants confirmed improved knowledge of their rights and obligations (97%) and of STRs (98%)



Additional components of the Programme

- We have been active in analyzing the gender impact of the pandemic and have published three Policy Briefs
 - COVID19 requires gender-equal responses to save economies
 - What future for women small-scale and ICBT when border close?
 - COVID19 puts women working in SIDS tourism industry at risk
 - Leveraging digital solutions to seize the potential of ICBT

- We contributed to the global debate on gender and trade/economics by providing forums for discussion, for example by organizing events during Aid for Trade Global Reviews, the yearly session of the WTO Public Forum, and the yearly sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSSW)



New Partnerships and Plans

Sessions 4

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Ongoing activities



- Response to COVID19: support to women informal/small-scale cross-border traders



- Planning to establish a Network of Trade and Gender Alumni hosted on LinkedIn



- Expanding the online courses project



Our partnerships



Asian Development Bank



FINNISH GOVERNMENT



SWEDEN

Canada



Australian Government



New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa



Malawi Government



Republic of Zambia

Pacific Islands