Can Trade Agreements Accommodate Gender Equality?

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Problem? – Existing Barriers, and how COVID-19 is Magnifying the Impact of Barriers

Solution? - Trade Agreements can Help: Best Practice Examples

Approach? - Measuring Gender-Responsiveness in FTAs using ITC's Maturity Toolkit

Next Steps? - Preparing Trade Policies to Reboot Inclusive Economy



COVID-19 Magnifying the Impact of Barriers

Key Barriers

Access to education (STEM and digital learning)

Access to markets, technology, finance and other productive resources

Time poverty, domestic violence and culturally-prescribed stereotypes

Business and employment restrictions; bans and prohibitions

Unfair working conditions and employment discrimination

Disproportionate tariff and non tariff barriers for trade in goods and services

For more details, see <u>Bahri, Women at the frontline of COVID-19</u>

COVID-19 exacerbating these barriers

COVID-19-Inflicted Challenges

Loss of jobs for 30% of women in service industries (proximity-demanding, low paid and temporary jobs)

740 million women in informal economy, either exposed to contagion risk or face imminent loss of jobs

- Women own close to 10 million of the world's SMEs; SMEs scaling down or facing closures
- Spiralling household responsibilities and domestic violence
- Reduced access to education, owing to lack of digital affordability and know-how
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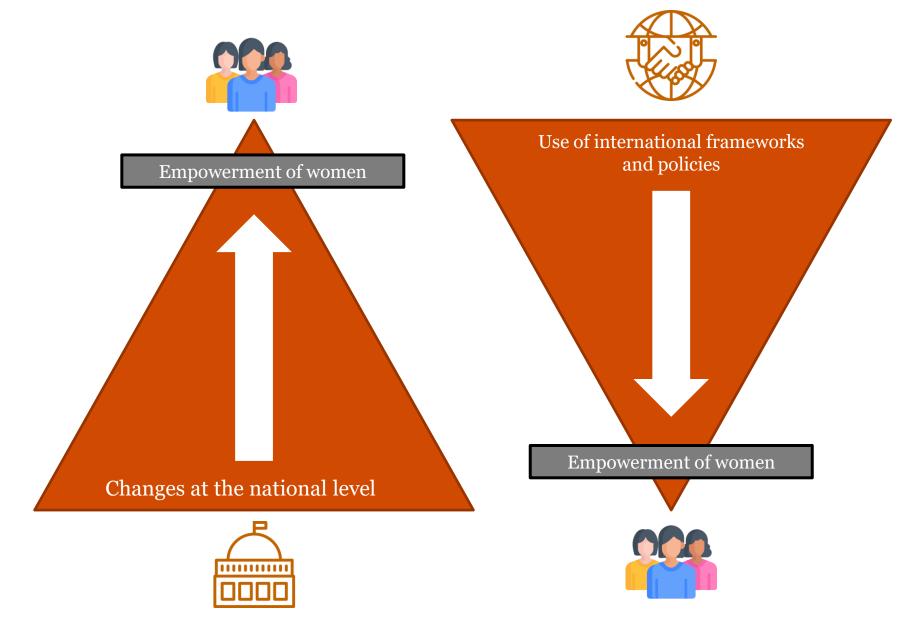
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Restricted access to health facilities, including maternity care and abortive services

Two Approaches: Bottom up or Top down

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Why negotiating instruments work?





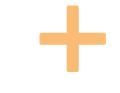
Ease of negotiating with certain countries (i.e., Canada)

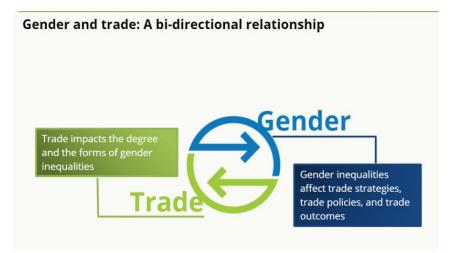


The inclusion of gender provisions is a precondition to negotiate with others (i.e., EU)

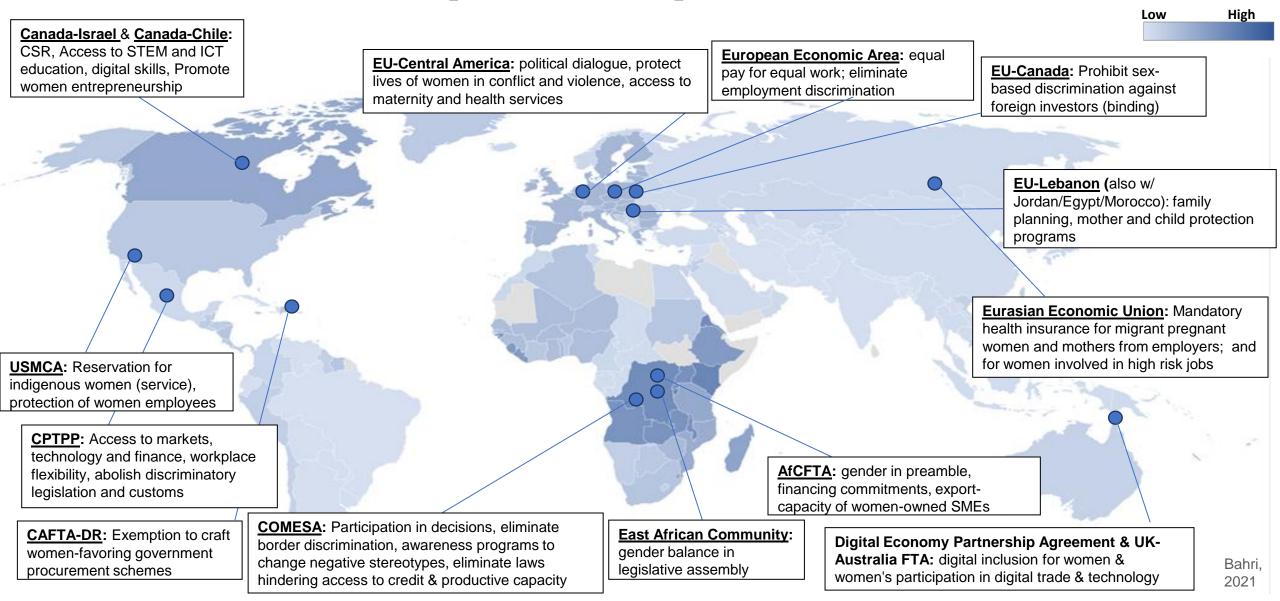


The Business Case: Gender Equality benefits the economy





Trade Agreements can Help: International Experience Measurement of Gender Responsiveness, as per <u>ITC Toolkit</u>



Focus Areas

Canada, Israel

Labor, Anti-discrimination, Market and resource access, business, Education, Voluntary standards, Research and awareness

USA, Mexico

Labour concerns, anti-discrimination, protection of indigenous women, market access and resource access

Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina

Childcare, Labor concerns, Antidiscrimination, market access, development, Women in business, STEM education, Access to finance

European Union

Equality, non-discrimination, education, skill development, health, safety, maternal care, protection from violence, political dialogues, privacy, data protection

Unite<u>d Kingdom</u>

Employment of pregnant women, Genderfriendly facilities in transportation, maternity & equivalent paternity benefits and insurance, social security, equality

Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

Maternity and Health concerns including mandatory insurance for female pregnant migrant workers

South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, New Zealand

Safety and protection, childcare, maternity, labor concerns, digital inclusion, child nutrition

North Africa and Middle East

Role in economic and social development, Education, Mother and child protection, Family Planning, Childcare, Equality

Australia

Education, Skill development, Market access, Resource access, Women in business, access to digital trade, digital infrastructure and know how

East and South Africa

Representation, anti-discrimination, market access, education, awareness, business, development, gender mainstreaming, cultural stereotypes, business training



What remains undone?

