

Can Trade Agreements Accommodate Gender Equality?

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COVID-19 Magnifying the Impact of Barriers

The Problem

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

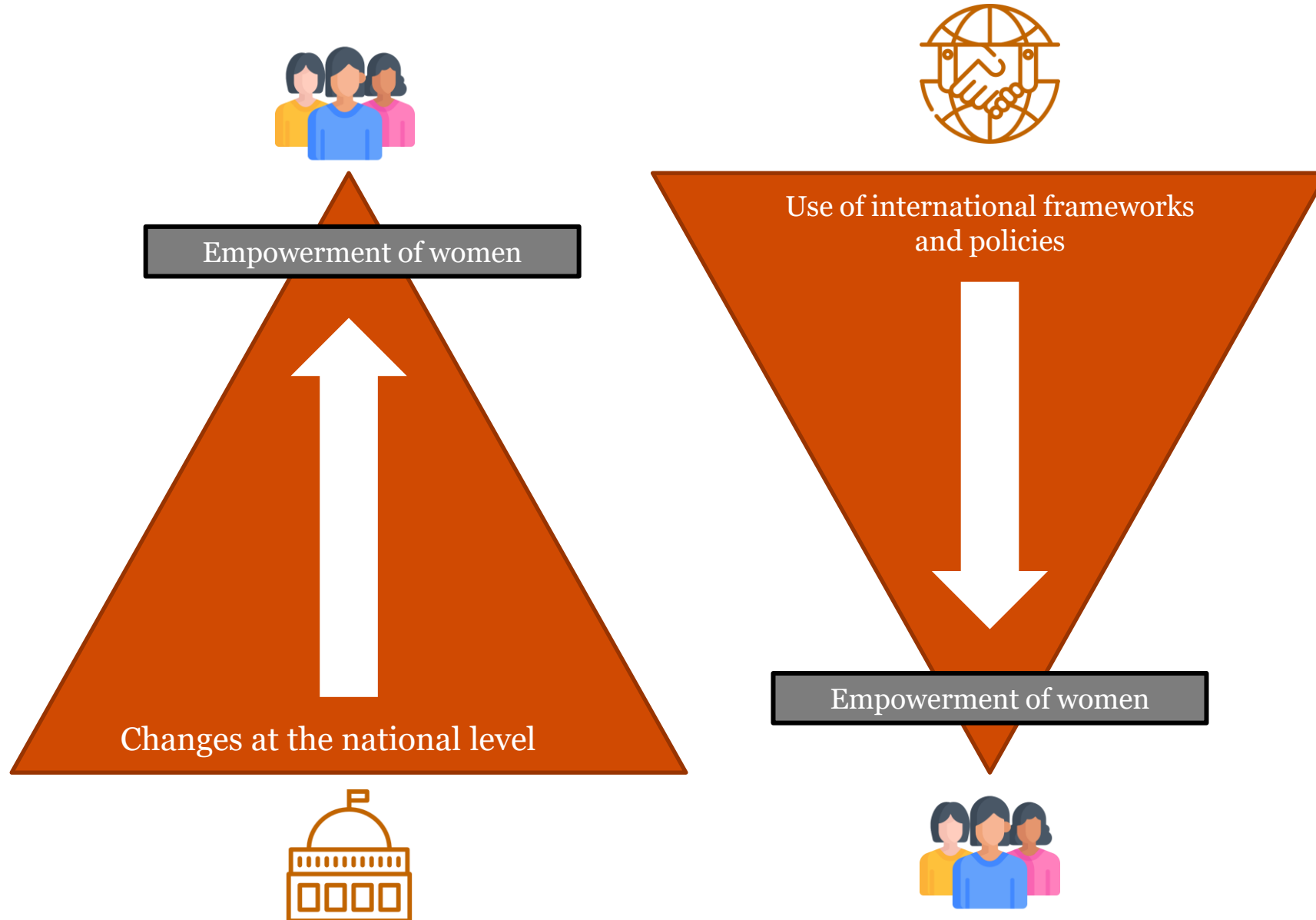
COVID-19
exacerbating these
barriers

COVID-19-Inflicted Challenges

- 1 Loss of jobs for 30% of women in service industries (proximity-demanding, low paid and temporary jobs)
- 2 740 million women in informal economy, either exposed to contagion risk or face imminent loss of jobs
- 3 Women own close to 10 million of the world's SMEs; SMEs scaling down or facing closures
- 4 Spiralling household responsibilities and domestic violence
- 5 Reduced access to education, owing to lack of digital affordability and know-how
- 6 Restricted access to health facilities, including maternity care and abortive services

For more details, see [Bahri, Women at the frontline of COVID-19](#)

Two Approaches: Bottom up or Top down



Why negotiating instruments work?

1 Diplomatic reasons

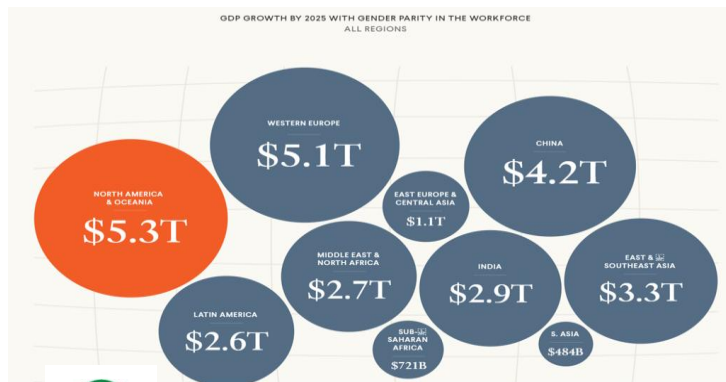


Ease of negotiating with certain countries (i.e., Canada)

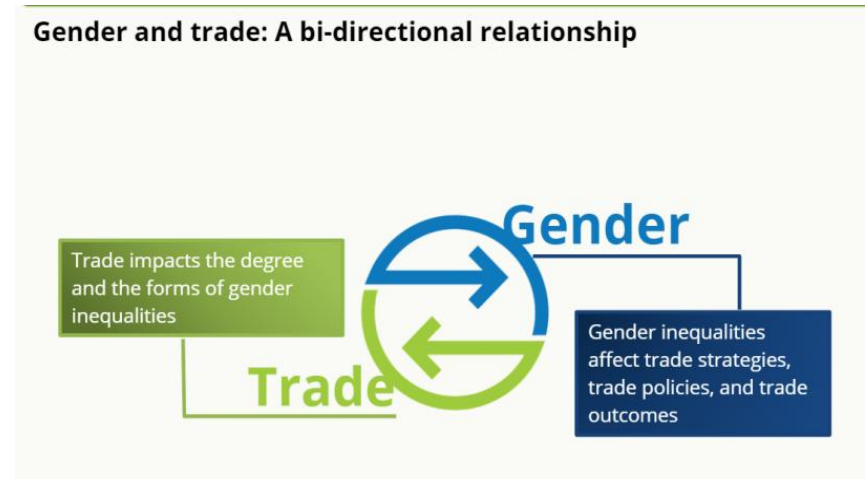


The inclusion of gender provisions is a precondition to negotiate with others (i.e., EU)

2 Substantive reasons

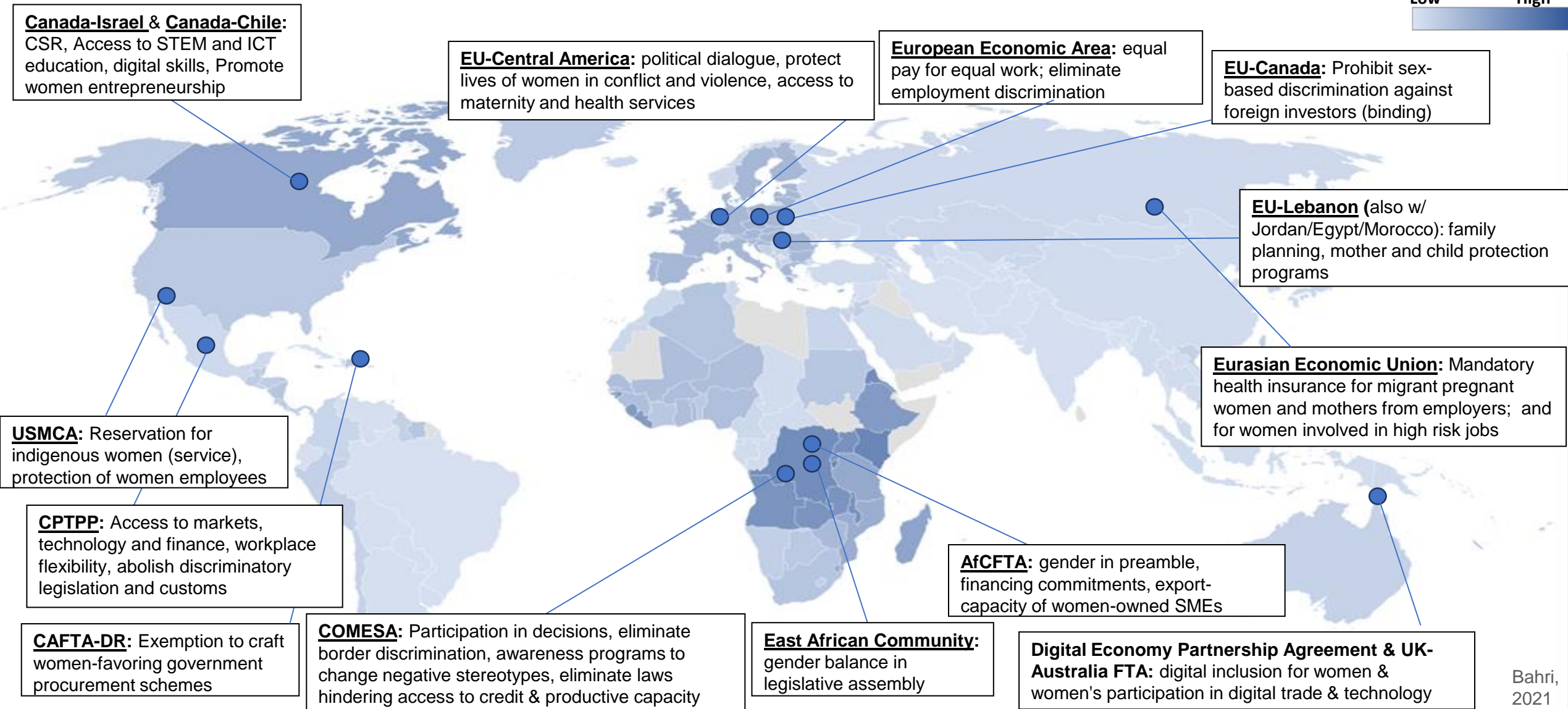


The Business Case: Gender Equality benefits the economy

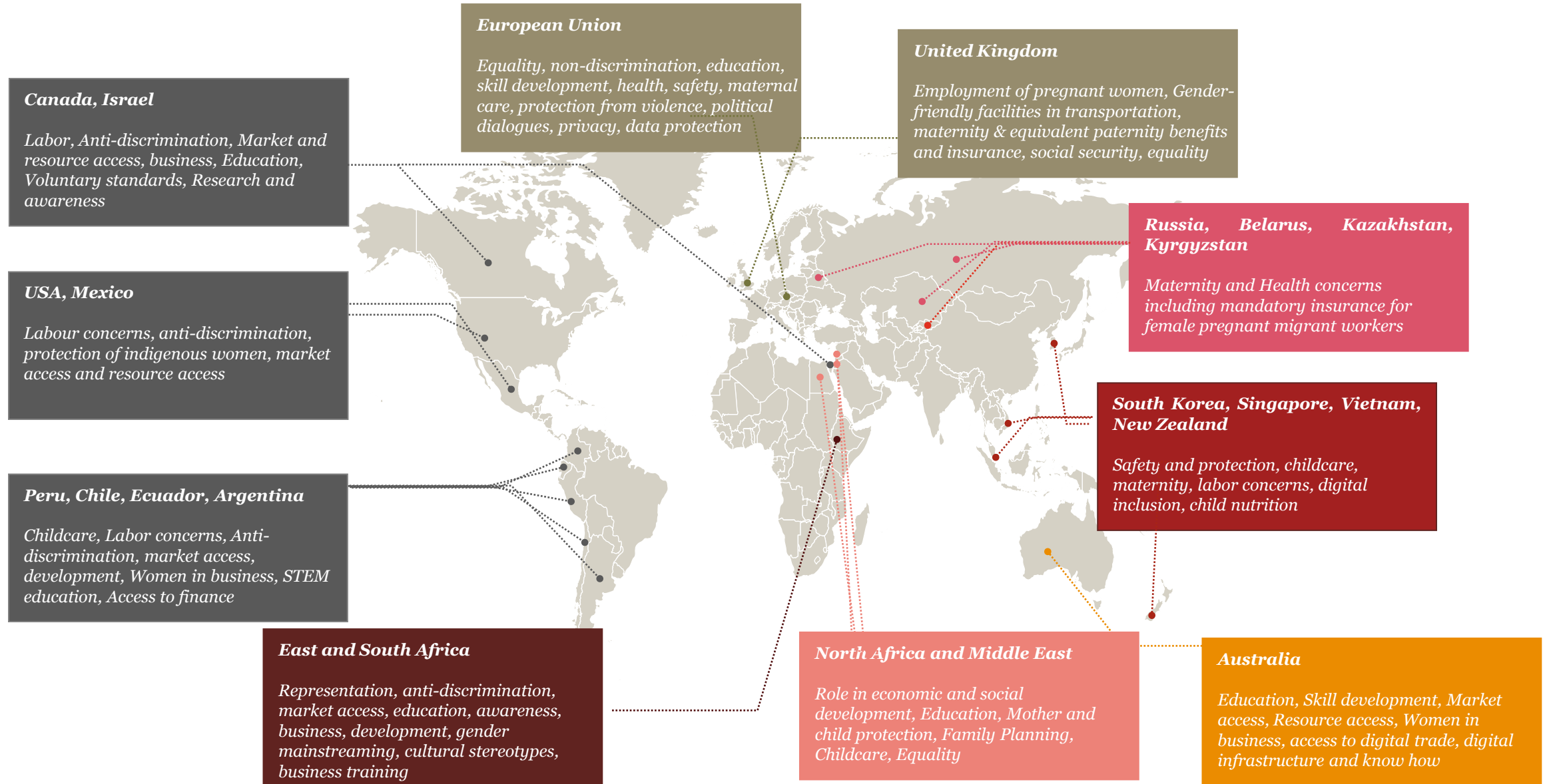


Trade Agreements can Help: International Experience

Measurement of Gender Responsiveness, as per [ITC Toolkit](#)



Focus Areas



What remains undone?

1

Implementation and Funding



2

Enforcement



3

Lack of Definition

