

# Gender Equality and Free Trade Agreements

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**Why use trade agreements?**

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**Can trade agreements help?**

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**How can they help?**

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**Policy recommendations**

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Contributes to... but may lead to...

are...

not gender neutral; distributional outcomes of FTAs can vary between women & men, as they play different roles in society, markets and economies, and enjoy different opportunities & resources access

Lowering barriers to trade (tariff and non tariff barriers)

Risk of lower revenue for social welfare support for vulnerable groups of women

Increasing employment and business opportunities for women

Environmental and health impact from higher consumption and production

Goods and services at lower prices and better quality for consumers

Risk of displacement of job and business opportunities in some industries

Breaking barriers women face at, within & across borders

Feminization of labor, leading to more Jobs but lower wages and poor work conditions

which should be addressed by...

**Negotiating FTAs with a gender lens**

**Gender Mainstreaming**

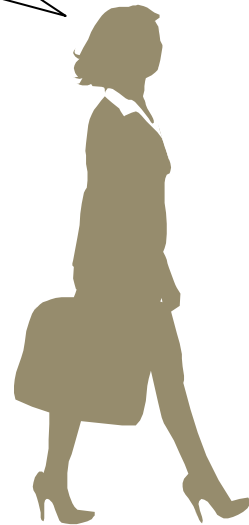
**Inclusive Trade**

# Why Use Trade Agreements to Empower Women?

## Breaking Barriers

### **Breaking Barriers at borders, within borders and across borders:**

Access to resources, labour standards, maternity needs protection, education and health, physical safety, breaking trade barriers, exploitation, discrimination, and others



## Creating Opportunities

### **Creating new employment and business opportunities for women:**

Jobs creation with higher salaries & better work conditions, new markets & clients, participation in value chains, market access expansion, e-commerce & flexible work opportunities, and others



# Why negotiating instruments work?

## 1 Diplomatic reasons

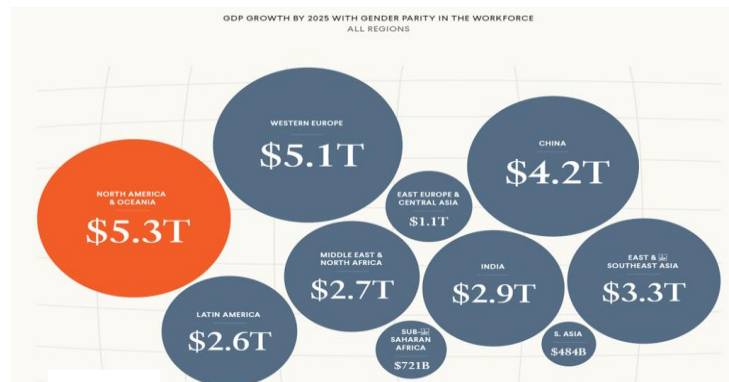


Ease of negotiating with certain economies



The inclusion of gender provisions is a precondition to negotiate with others

## 2 Substantive reasons



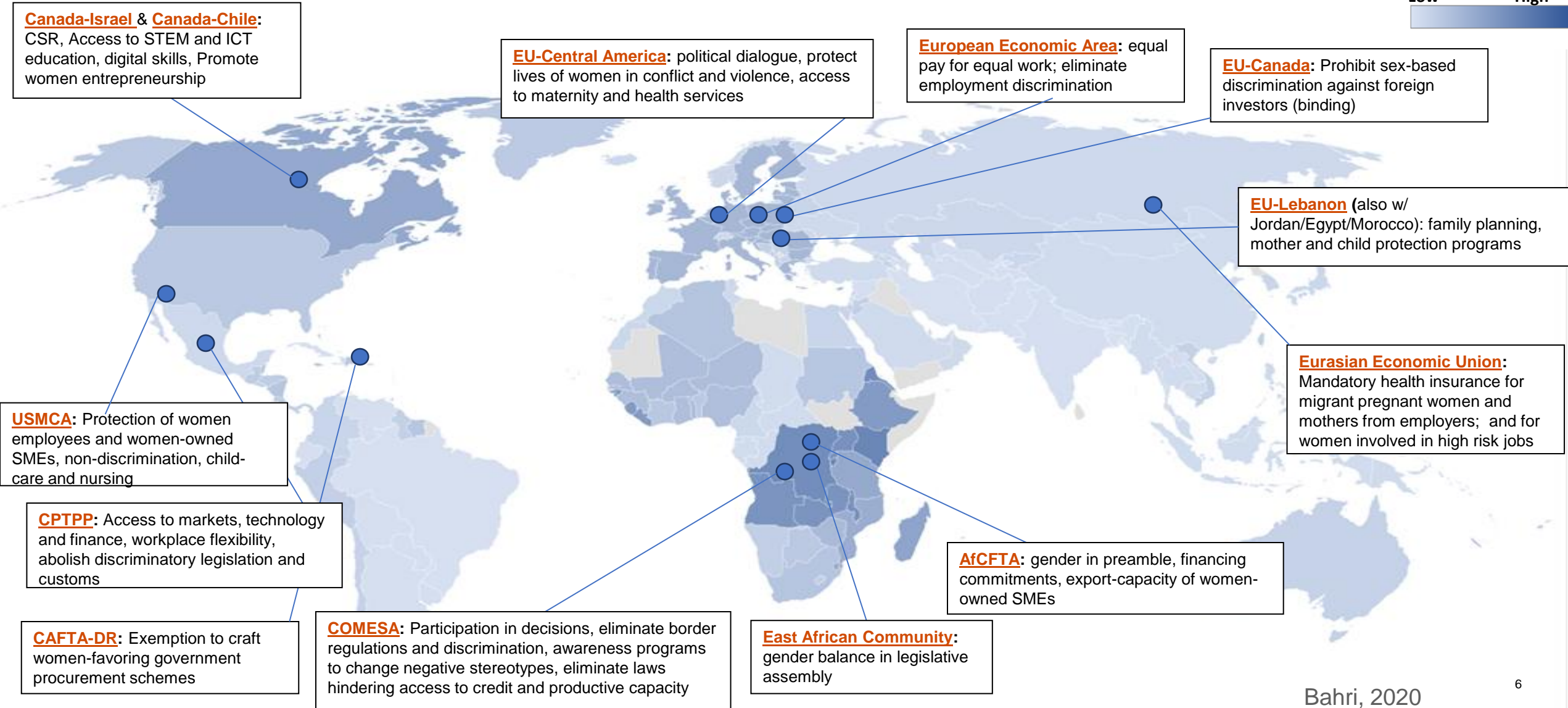
The Business Case: Gender Equality benefits the economy

### Gender and trade: A bi-directional relationship



# Trade Agreements can Help: Good Practice Examples

## The Solution



# Focus Areas

Bahri, 2020

## **Canada, Israel**

*Labor, anti-discrimination, market & resource access, business, education, voluntary standards, research, awareness*

## **USA, Mexico**

*Labour, anti-discrimination, protection of indigenous women, market access & resource access*

## **Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina**

*Childcare, labor, anti-discrimination, market access, development, business, STEM education, access to finance*

## **European Union**

*Equality, non-discrimination, education, skill development, health, safety, maternal care, political dialogue, privacy, data protection*

## **United Kingdom**

*Employment of pregnant women, gender-friendly transportation, maternity & paternity benefits, social security, equality*

## **Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan**

*Maternity & health concerns including mandatory insurance for pregnant migrant workers*

## **South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, New Zealand**

*Safety & protection, childcare, maternity, labor, digital inclusion, child nutrition*

## **East and South Africa**

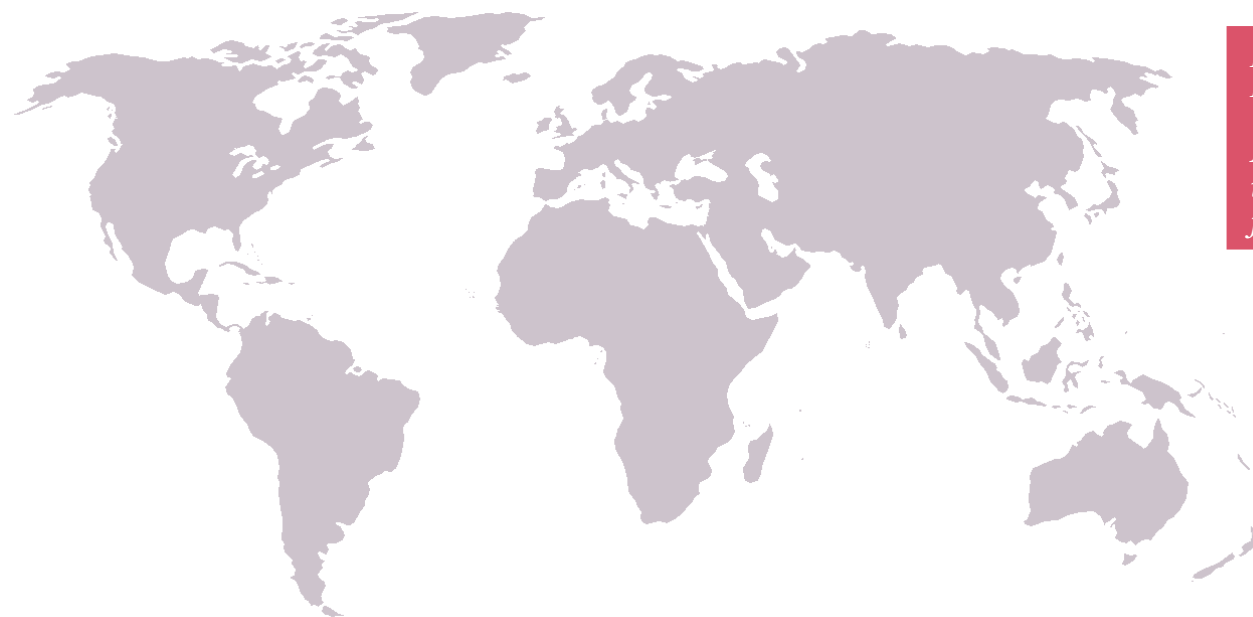
*Representation, market access, education, awareness, business, regional development, cultural stereotypes, business training*

## **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 & resource access, women in business, access to digital trade, digital infrastructure & know how*



# Different approaches, but 3 commonalities...

1

Promises and More Promises



2

Implementation and Enforcement



3

Lack of Definition

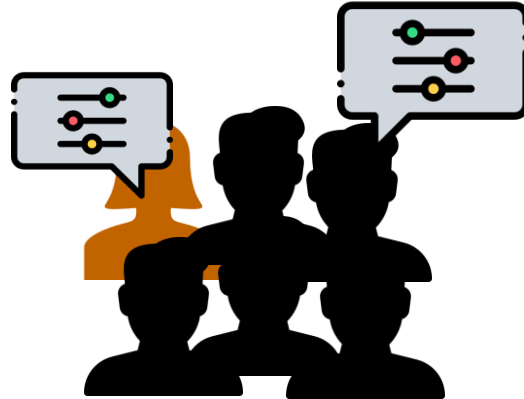




# What impedes gender mainstreaming? The Hesitations and Impediments



1. Fears of Protectionism and cultural imperialism



2. Underrepresentation of women in policy-making roles



3. Lack of political will



4. Cost of compliance, and probability of compliance






5. Absence of expertise and paucity of gender disaggregated data



6. Lack of understanding and awareness

# Measuring Gender-Responsiveness of FTAs: ITC's Maturity Toolkit

Category	Definition	Dimensions	
 <p><b>Awareness</b></p>	This category reflects parties' awareness and the importance they assign to the incorporation of gender concerns in the given free trade agreement (FTA).	1. Frequency of Relevant Provisions	2. Location of Relevant Provisions
		3. Affirmations and Reaffirmations	
 <p><b>Affirmative Action</b></p>	This category reflects whether parties to the given FTA consider or commit to any affirmative action to incorporate gender concerns.	4. Cooperation Activities	5. Institutional Arrangement
		6. Procedural Arrangements	7. Review and Funding
 <p><b>Enforcement</b></p>	This category reflects whether parties to the given FTA consider or commit to the robust enforcement of gender-components included in the FTA.	8. Settlement of Disputes	9. Waivers, Reservations & Exceptions
		10. Minimum Legal Standards	

## Limited

FTA at this level is either completely or close to being gender-blind or gender-neutral in nature as it fails to mainstream gender concerns.

## Evolving

FTA at this level employs some best practices for mainstreaming gender concerns, but it has a significant scope for further improvement.

## Advanced

FTA at this level achieves the highest level of maturity in the way it mainstreams gender concerns, and there is no or only a negligible scope for further improvement.

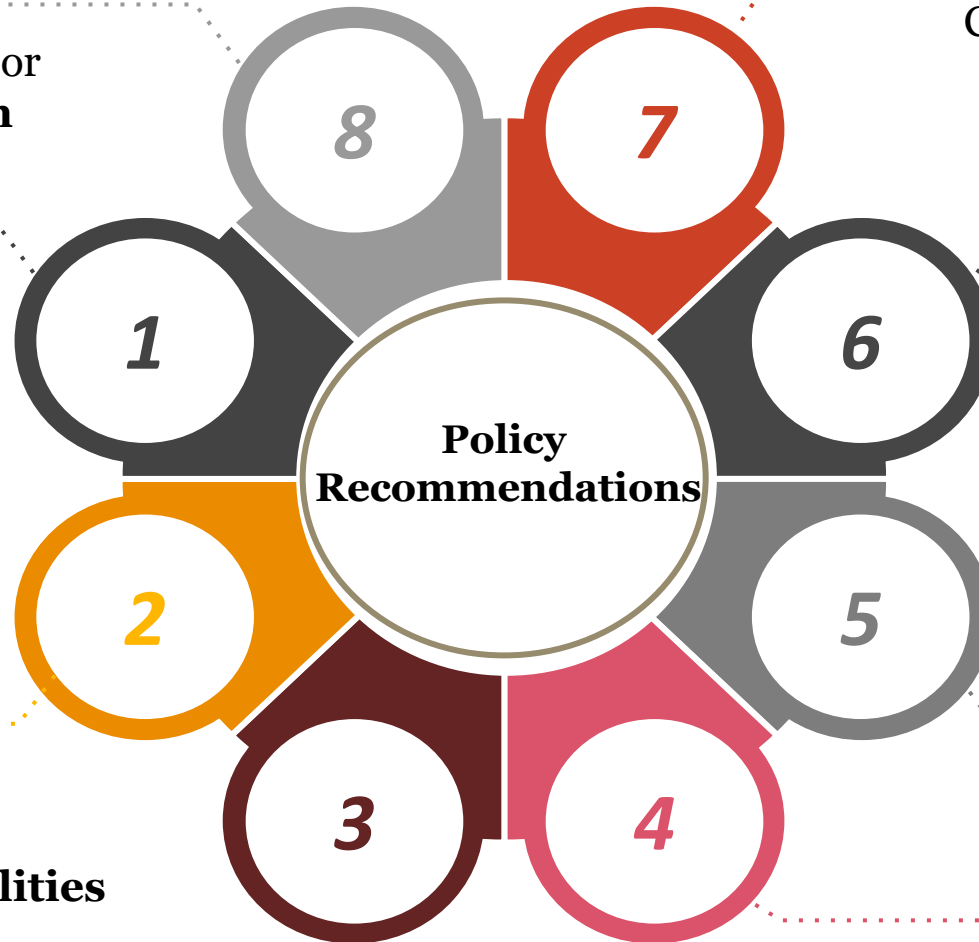
# What Remains Undone? Some Policy Recommendations

Craft a Gender-Explicit Exception or Invoke Public Morality **Exception**

Consider **Whole-of-Agreement Approach**, Mainstream Gender throughout Agreement

Commit to Enhance **Business Potential & Market Access**, Focus on Women's Business or Leaders Role

Engage Private Stakeholders via **Corporate Social Responsibilities & Consultations**



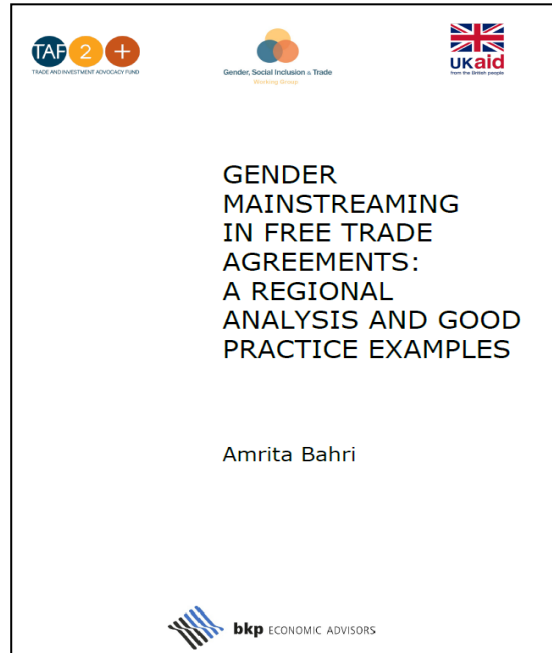
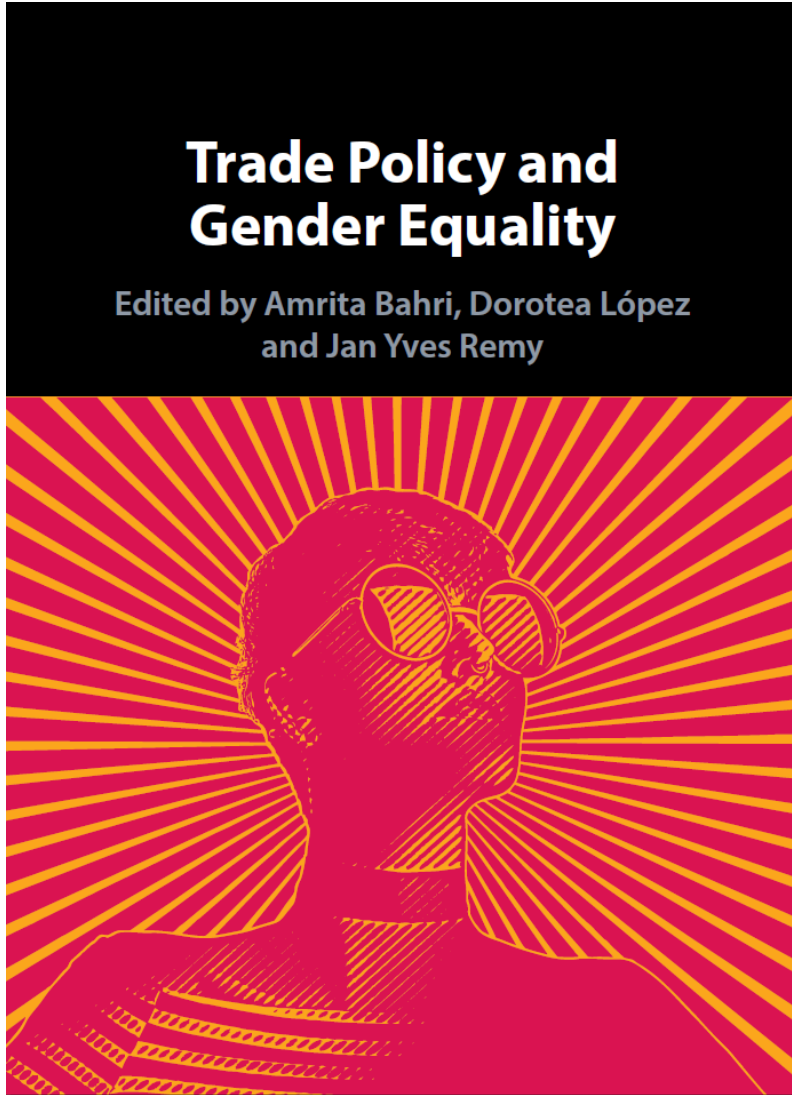
Create Institutions, Procedures and Financing Channels to Ensure **Implementation**

Consider Enforcing Commitments with **Dispute Settlement Mechanism and Remedies**

**Define** “Gender”, “Gender Equality” & “Gender Equity”

Engage **Women in Policy-Making**

# Recent Publications



*The Covid-19 pandemic has deepened the existing gender inequalities. In particular, it*