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EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH TRADE

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Introduction

Women are disproportionately affected by poverty. They are discriminated against and exploited in ways that limit their life choices. Women are more likely to end up in insecure, vulnerable and low-wage jobs because they do not have equal access to education, skills training, financial resources, information, and social protection measures

Trade has the potential to contribute significantly to growth and employment. Countries that have embraced openness have been more successful in sustaining growth and moving up the development ladder than those that have not. In the 1990s, per capita real income grew more than three times faster for developing countries that lowered trade barriers, according to the World Bank (OECD et al., 2010). Trade can make an essential contribution to delivering the growth necessary to end poverty (World Bank and WTO, 2015). Women's participation in trade can provide an additional boost to the growth potential of openness and to the sustainability of that growth. Economies with better opportunities for women are more competitive. These economies will benefit more from openness than economies that are less friendly to female involvement in the economy. Increased female income is likely to be disproportionately spent on the well-being and education of children. As a result, women's income has a direct impact on reducing income inequality and on future growth through its impact on education. Good for growth Women contribute to international trade as producers, entrepreneurs, employees and consumers. One of the most important ways they contribute is as owners and managers of women-owned businesses.

A woman is economically empowered when she has the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions. Empowering women is mandatory if they are to play an active role in shaping institutions, social norms and the well-being of their communities. Empowerment gives women greater control over decisions within their households.

Women Empowerment

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities.

Gender stereotypes constrain women's opportunities to get jobs, and burden them with an unfair proportion of unpaid work, and family and household responsibilities. These and other