



EMPOWER  
WOMEN,  
POWER  
TRADE



Enhanced Integrated Framework

Trade for LDC development

INITIATIVE AIMS AT TRANSFORMING  
THE ECONOMIC LIVES OF WOMEN IN  
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES



Enhanced Integrated Framework

## Trade for LDC development

The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is the only multilateral partnership dedicated exclusively to assisting the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in their use of trade as an engine for growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction. The EIF partnership of 51 countries, 24 Donors and 8 Partner Agencies works closely with governments, development organizations, civil society and academia. Together, we leverage our collective know-how, reach and reputation to tackle the world's most pressing trade-for-development issues.

Over the past ten years, the EIF has helped the poorest countries to strengthen policy environments for trade, enable exports to untapped new markets and ensure that goods and services move easily across borders. Women's economic empowerment has been at the heart of the EIFs' work, and it

continues to be one of the strategic priorities in the Strategic Plan for 2019-2022. Thanks to our global mandate and unique partnership approach driven by country ownership, the EIF is in a unique position to support the LDCs to incorporate women's empowerment principles in their trade-related policy and regulatory frameworks. Our work with the private sector on supply-side constraints enables us to also work with female producers, cross-border traders and exporters to build their productive capacity and ability to tap into regional and international markets. Building on our work to date as well as lessons learned, this strategy note lays out the objectives and expected outcomes of the EIF Initiative 'Empower Women, Power Trade', including the contribution we will be making towards attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.





# INTRODUCTION

## More women than men currently live in poverty.

Globally, women are 4% more likely than men overall to live in extreme poverty, and working age women are 22% more likely to do so.<sup>1</sup> In many LDCs, poverty and gender inequality operate in a vicious cycle that affects every aspect of women's lives. In 2017, the UNDP's Gender Inequality Index, which looks at dimensions such as reproductive health, educational attainment and political and workforce participation, was 0.559 for the LDCs, compared with 0.468 for developing countries.<sup>2</sup> The gender divide is even graver in fragile and conflict-affected LDCs.

## The empowerment of girls and women is one of the most effective tools for poverty eradication and sustainable economic development.

When women are empowered economically, they invest in their families and communities, spurring economic growth and improving development outcomes for the next generation. Women's economic empowerment can also enhance productivity and efficiency of LDC economies, boosting their global competitiveness. Research shows that promoting women's economic participation, especially in developing countries, could increase global economic growth by US\$12 trillion by 2025.<sup>3</sup>

## Women's empowerment is therefore key to achieving the SDGs.

Not only is gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls an explicit goal of the 2030 agenda under SDG 5, it is also crucial to achieving progress across all the Goals and Targets. Gender equality will for example be critical to the attainment of SDG 1 relating to poverty reduction and equal access to economic resources; SDG 2 relating to access to nutrition; SDG 3 relating to health and sexual and reproductive healthcare; SDG 4 relating to access to education at all levels; and SDG 8 relating to access to decent jobs, to name but a few. The EIF Initiative 'Empower Women, Power Trade' similarly recognizes that achieving gender equality is not only an important goal in and of itself, but also a catalyst for achieving a sustainable future for all.

## Across the LDCs, women continue to face gender-based constraints that limit their participation in global trade.

Women tend to be concentrated in informal, low-paid and low-productivity jobs, often characterized by precarious working conditions, making them particularly vulnerable to trade-related adjustments and technological change. Social norms relating to women's care responsibilities and mobility further restrict their ability to participate in productive employment within global value chains. Despite making up half of the world's population, women only own one-third of formal businesses worldwide and have less access to financial

1 UN Women 2018.

2 Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update, UNDP.

3 McKinsey Global Institute 2015

services, markets and property. Female-owned micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are disproportionately affected by a number of gender-based barriers relating to access to information, training, networks and trade finance, which limit their ability to access opportunities in regional and international trade. Limited influence and participation of

women in national policy-making processes means that trade related laws and policies overlook women or even actively discriminate against them. Ninety per cent of the LDCs have at least one law discriminating against women's participation in the economy.<sup>4</sup>

## What are gender-based constraints faced by female producers and MSMEs in the LDCs?



However, given inclusive policies and investments, trade can play an important role in women's economic empowerment.

By generating new opportunities in wage labour and production, trade can enhance women's economic independence. Trade can also create opportunities for female entrepreneurs to enter regional and global value chains, for example through e-commerce. The objective of this Initiative

is to enable female producers, cross-border traders and female-owned MSMEs in the LDCs to access international markets and grow their exports through improved productive capacity as well as an enabling trade policy environment. The strategic framework presented on page 12 outlines the expected outcomes and operational dimensions of our work under the Initiative.

<sup>4</sup> Based on data in Women Business and the Law – 2016, World Bank Group.







# LEARNING FROM OUR WORK TO DATE

*Since its inception, the EIF has contributed to women's economic empowerment and gender equality in the LDCs. We have highlighted below some of the key achievements from our work to date:*

- We have partnered with international agencies, such as the International Trade Centre (ITC) to analyse the gender dimension in the EIF's work and develop good practices in gender mainstreaming to help the LDCs integrate gender into trade and development policy and programmes. This has increased our shared understanding of trade and gender and enabled the EIF beneficiary countries to develop more gender-sensitive policies and programming. For instance, in The Gambia, the EIF worked to mainstream trade through the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment, The Gambia's development strategy and investment programme, wherein the Government clearly lays out the measures it will undertake to promote gender equality and empower women.
- We have integrated gender into our diagnostic work as part of the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) process. For instance, the 2017 Tanzania DTIS Update has a dedicated chapter on gender. The DTISs in Nepal and Cambodia included the impact on women employment as one of the parameters for identifying priority sectors for trade. When DTISs highlight the challenges faced by women in trade, the opportunity for leveraging additional resources to address these constraints becomes more realistic.
- We have built the capacity of trade ministries and agencies to integrate gender-responsive measures into the design and implementation of trade-related programmes, legislation and policies, to achieve fairer and beneficial outcomes for all.
- We have ensured that all our projects and programmes track gender-disaggregated data and include gender specific targets. The trade-related trainings and projects that we carry out often have high levels of female participation, ranging between 20% and 60%, depending on country contexts. Further, many of our projects focus on productive sectors, such as agriculture, e-commerce and tourism, in which women are actively engaged.
- We have implemented a number of projects specifically targeting women producers, traders and entrepreneurs, leveraging partnerships with organizations, such as ITC.



***We recognize that these efforts need to be deepened and made more impactful. Having rolled out our 2019-2022 Strategy, we will adapt our approach based on some key lessons learned:***

Improving women's participation in trade policy formulation and implementation is key to ensuring that women's preferences and concerns are adequately addressed.

This requires engendering the policy-making process within trade institutions, ensuring that women are effectively integrated as part of consultation and policy development. It also requires integrating women's business and trade associations into trade-related decision making and building their capacity to effectively engage with trade agencies and ministries and influence the policy-making process. Finally, in order to effectively participate in trade reforms, both government institutions and civil society actors need access to sex-disaggregated trade data. Our experience to date indicates that this is an area where a major gap still exists in many LDCs.

Trade is also vital for enabling market access and upgrading within agricultural value chains.

Trade can play an important role in terms of enabling access to new agricultural farming technologies, which can in turn drive up the productivity of the sector. As an example, by enabling producers to meet standards and production demands of international markets through improved technology, our projects have created jobs and increased income for female producers of cashew and mango in Burkina Faso and of coconut in Samoa. Agriculture is a sector where women are predominantly concentrated in the LDCs, both as producers and cross-border traders. For example, women dominate agricultural trade between the LDCs in Asia and in Sub-Saharan Africa. Agriculture will therefore continue to be a strong focus of our work.

Aid for Trade (AfT) can support access to decent work for women.

Increasing access to decent jobs through trade has always been a strong focus for the EIF. As such, the EIF has an important role to play in terms of contributing to the achievement of SDG 8. As women tend to be concentrated in informal jobs, often characterized by precarious working conditions, creating more decent jobs for women through trade will be an important focus of our work moving forward.

*Our 2019-2022 Initiative 'Empower Women, Power Trade' further builds on the **EIF's unique value proposition as a partner to the LDCs undertaking reform for trade-led sustainable development:***

The EIF has a global mandate for targeted support to the LDCs.

At the same time, we know that most trade between the LDCs is conducted by MSMEs and in the form of cross-border trade, which is dominated by women. The in-country coordination mechanisms and partnerships we have built with key trade related ministries and agencies in the LDCs mean that we are best placed to reach women cross-border traders and women-owned MSMEs directly and support their growth and improved access to markets.

The EIF's approach to supporting the LDCs capitalizes on the DTIS process to help mobilize additional resources.

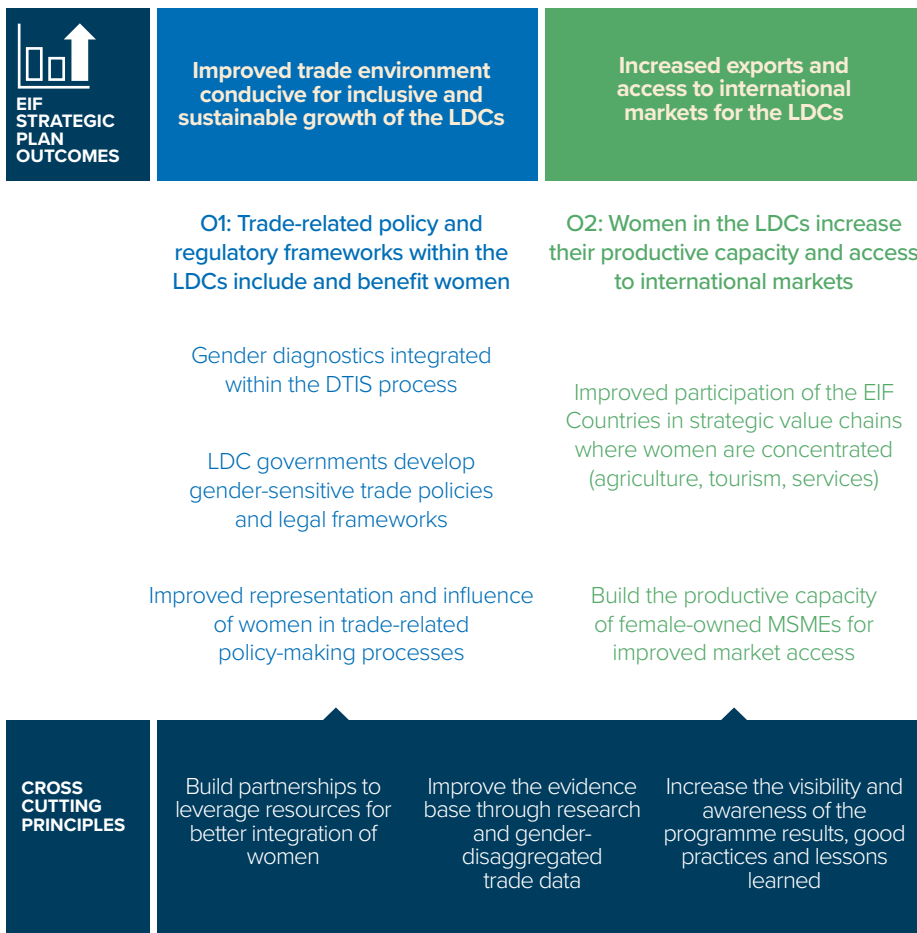
By integrating gender within the DTIS process, we can support the LDCs to mobilize resources for women in trade focused initiatives as part of an overall AfT framework rather than in isolation. We believe that this can significantly increase the flow of funds from government treasuries, development partners and the private sector to activities focused on women.

The EIF's partnership approach means that we are able to call on the expertise and influence of other players in the international trade and development arena.

For example, leveraging partnerships such as our collaboration with ITC's SheTrades programme means that we can call on their unique expertise as well as resources to deliver deeper impact.

# OUR 2019-2022 STRATEGY

Our Strategy puts gender and women's empowerment at the heart of everything we do and will enable us to channel additional resources towards integrating women producers, traders and entrepreneurs within global value chains. Our Initiative 'Empower Women, Power Trade' is not just a stand alone initiative but reinforces and supports the EIF's overall Strategic Plan for 2019-2022. Our Initiative's objectives are therefore directly linked to the two goals outlined in the EIF Strategic Plan.



## Outcome 1: Trade-related policy and regulatory frameworks within the LDCs include and benefit women.

### Output 1.1: Gender diagnostics integrated within the DTIS process

- Incorporate gender analysis in all DTISs.
- Develop a set of guidelines on undertaking gender-sensitive DTISs based on best practice
  - Conduct a learning study on how the DTIS process to date has captured gender-based analysis of trade and opportunities for further improvement and deepening of the approach.
  - Integrate new guidelines in all upcoming DTISs and other trade diagnostics.

### Output 1.2: LDC governments develop gender-sensitive trade policies and legal frameworks

- Support governments to carry out trade-related policy and regulatory audits for gender compliance.
- Support LDC governments to improve the collection of gender-disaggregated trade data.
- Build the capacity of governments and trade institutions to formulate and implement gender sensitive trade policies and regulation.
- Support countries to undertake sector-specific interventions to address the policy/regulatory challenges faced by women-led MSMEs, with a particular focus on e-commerce.
- Build the capacity of regional economic communities to promote women's role in cross-border trade through a supportive policy and regulatory environment and targeted interventions.

### Output 1.3: Improved representation and influence of women in trade-related policy-making processes

- Build the capacity of women's cooperatives and business and trade associations to effectively participate in trade negotiations and policy-setting processes.
- Ensure that training for public officials in investment and trade-related areas includes women.
- Ensure women's representation in EIF National Steering Committees.

## Outcome 2: Women in the LDCs increase their productive capacity and access to international markets.

### Output 2.1: Improved participation of the EIF Countries in strategic value chains where women are concentrated (agriculture, tourism and services)

- Support enterprises in target value chains with a large female workforce or female supplier base, to access regional and international markets through improved compliance with export market requirements and adoption of new technologies.
- Encourage targeted gender support projects through thematic calls for proposals and collaborating with EIF partner initiatives, such as ITC's She Trades initiative.

### Output 2.2: Female-owned MSMEs increase their productive capacity and access to international markets

- Support female-owned MSMEs to deepen their understanding of the opportunities that value chains have to offer and build their skills to effectively participate and harness the benefits.
- Expose female-owned MSMEs in the LDCs to international and regional trade opportunities.
- Support female-owned MSMEs to comply with export standards, obtain product and qualification certifications and apply good agricultural, manufacturing and service provision practices.
- Work with ITC and UNCTAD to support female-owned MSMEs to access opportunities in e-commerce and IT-enabled services.
- Grow women's digital skills and promote the use of emerging technologies and platforms, such as ITC's SheTrades initiative, to improve access to international markets for female-owned MSMEs.
- Strengthen the capacity of women's cooperatives and trade and business associations to support female members in accessing international markets.

## These *cross-cutting principles* will be key to our implementation approach across the two outcomes:

### Leverage partnerships

- Leverage partnerships across a wide range of stakeholders to promote a greater inclusion of women in trade in the LDCs. Continue growing our partnerships with Agencies with core competences in trade and gender, for example ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Bank and the WTO, among others. Identify new partners, such as development agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, think tanks and academia working towards women's economic empowerment to leverage resources and technical expertise.

### Improve evidence

- Improve evidence through targeted research and improved collection of sex-disaggregated trade data to generate evidence to inform programme and policy design at the macro level.

### Increase the visibility and awareness of the results

- Increase the visibility and awareness of the results, good practices and lessons learned emerging from the EIF Initiative 'Empower Women, Power Trade'.



# RESOURCES

Through its funding mechanism, the EIF commits to set aside up to US\$10 million over the duration of the Strategy period (2019-2022) targeted at the gender and the EIF Initiative 'Empower Women, Power Trade'. These resources will be made available through various approaches, such as the recently created thematic/innovative funding window; through productive capacity projects submitted by countries; and co funding leveraging existing programmes funded by EIF partners and partner agencies.

# MONITORING & EVALUATION AND RESULTS

This Initiative will be implemented as part of our overall Strategic Plan 2019-2022. We will report on progress as part of the EIF programme and project management cycle in line with the EIF's overall monitoring and reporting framework.

Specifically, we will monitor progress against a set of key indicators, as outlined in the logframe below. Indicators marked with an asterisk indicate those already represented in the overall EIF programme logframe. We have included seven additional indicators to measure progress of specific progress of the Initiative. Further, we will emphasize gender equality and disaggregated data as a major component of each EIF project with clear measurable results and targets, at both outcome and output levels.

Our overall impact should transform the economic lives of 50,000 women in the LDCs.

This estimate excludes indirect beneficiaries who will benefit from the programme support, and hence, the impact is much greater.

Through evaluations, we will quantify and report on these numbers.





# WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE LOGFRAME<sup>5</sup>

OUTCOME	INDICATORS	OUTPUTS	INDICATORS
<b>1: Trade-related policy and regulatory frameworks within the LDCs include and benefit women.</b>	<b>Number of countries with gender integrated into trade-related policy and regulatory frameworks.</b>	1.1 Gender diagnostics integrated within the DTIS process.	1.1.1 Percentage of DTISs that integrate gender analysis. 1.1.2 Number of actions implemented arising from gender integration into DTISs.
		1.2 LDC governments develop gender-sensitive trade policies and legal frameworks.	1.2.1 Number of gender-sensitive trade and investment policies formulated and updated with support from the EIF.
		1.3 Improved representation and influence of women in trade-related policy-making processes.	1.3.1 Number of EIF National Steering Committees where women's groups are represented. 1.3.2 Number of public officials (disaggregated by gender and age) trained in investment and trade related areas.* 1.3.3 Number of private sector and civil society representatives (disaggregated by gender and age) trained in investment and trade-related areas to participate in the national trade agenda.*

<sup>5</sup> Indicators marked with an asterisk indicate ones already represented in the overall EIF programme logframe

OUTCOME	INDICATORS	OUTPUTS	INDICATORS
<p><b>2: Women in the LDCs increase their productive capacity and access to international markets.</b></p>	<p>Percentage of women directly benefitting from EIF-funded productive sector projects.*</p>	<p>2.1 Improved participation of EIF Countries in strategic value chains where women are concentrated.</p>	<p>2.1.1 Total number of people trained in value chain practices (disaggregated by gender and age) through participation in EIF capacity-building initiatives.*</p> <p>2.1.2 Number of people (disaggregated by gender) adopting new technology through EIF capacity building initiatives.*</p> <p>2.1.3 Number of awareness-raising activities conducted on gender and the environment.*</p>
	<p>Number of new international markets accessed by women-owned MSMEs with support from the EIF.</p>	<p>2.2 Female owned MSMEs increase their productive capacity and access to international markets.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Number of female-owned MSMEs supported by EIF projects.</p> <p>2.2.2 Number of producer associations (disaggregated by MSMEs, women-owned) trained in value chain practices.*</p>



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*The Enhanced Integrated Framework brings together partners and resources to support the Least Developed Countries in using trade for poverty reduction, inclusive growth and sustainable development.*



*EIF Partner Agencies*

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

International Trade Centre (ITC)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

World Bank Group (WB)

World Trade Organization (WTO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

*EIF Trust Fund Manager*

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

*EIF Trust Fund Donors*

