



Overview

Trade contributes to all aspects of economic and social development. Export trade brings in earning from foreign exchange, while domestic commerce underpins the employment sector. Women are already involved in many aspects of the trade sector, but their enormous potential contribution to the sector has rarely been fully acknowledged. Yet gender equality in this area is an issue not only of social justice but also of economic efficiency.

Gender mainstreaming in the trade sector entails the equal consideration and participation of women and men in every aspect of trade (in policy and decision-making, in trading operations, in access to opportunities for work and in upgrading of skills and career development). It implies a change of mind-set away from traditional perceptions (by both sexes) of the capacity of women to compete with men on an equal footing in the trade environment. Strategies must involve both the public and private sectors and be carried through over a number of years.

Key issues for the sector include the following:

- there is a serious gender imbalance in staff of most ministries of trade;
- in private sector business and interest groups there is little evidence that gender issues are considered, unless ministries of trade can offer special incentives or other economically interesting reasons;
- women entrepreneurs face difficulties in obtaining credit and finance, as well as legal, social and administrative barriers;
- there is a gender gap in education, with lack of orientation towards entrepreneurship or training for management responsibilities

The *Trade and Industry* manual is primarily oriented to gender mainstreaming within ministries of trade and related government agencies. However, while the ministries are mandated to establish policies and regulations, it is overwhelmingly the private sector that actually conducts trading operations. This manual therefore includes recommendations for the private sector trading community as well, and such organisations as overseas trade representation services, chambers of commerce, export promotion boards, standards and certification bureaux and parastatal trading companies and business associations. It provides an overview of gender issues in the trade sector, and strategic objectives and recommendations for action. The appendix offers tools for gender analysis and planning that could be adapted to other sectors.

Points of entry

- gender imbalances in staffing of ministries of trade and related bodies to be addressed.
- ministry of trade should offer incentives to encourage private sector businesses and parastatal enterprises to take up gender equality as a priority issue and to increase recruitment of women into management level posts.
- legal, administrative and policy issues include: constitutional and legal aspects of commercial operations; property rights, licensing and company registration; access to credit and financing; and trade-related human resource development, including equal access to training.

Barriers

- Traditional perceptions of the capacity of women can hamper their access to trade and management training, entrepreneurial development, and credit and finance.
- Many women lack the personal confidence as well as technical skills, experience and financial resources to enter into the business environment and management roles.
- Family obligations of women are often not shared equally by men.
- There are inadequate numbers of qualified women candidates.
- There is a dearth of trade-related training opportunities.

What's in this module?

This module contains six training activities relating to the trade and industry sector.

Three activities cover gender mainstreaming tools and issues as applied in this sector, and could be adapted for other sectors (D1 'Gender imbalances among senior staff', D2 'Assessment of perceptions' and D5 'Strategic objectives for promoting gender equality'). Three activities deal with issues specific to this sector (D3 'Challenges faced by women-owned SMEs', D4 'Gender and trade liberalisation' and D6 'Export production villages (EPVs)').

Checklist

- Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the *GMS Trade and Industry* manual before you start to deliver the training activities in this module.
- The Toolkit Action Guide Unit 4 'Using the GMS sector manuals' will give you an overview and help you find out what is in the manual and where, and which sections will be most useful.
- Look through the 'To help you choose' table in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide for activities, topics, methods and handouts from other modules and sectors that you can adapt to fit your purposes.
- Always start planning your training with an analysis of your learners and their needs.
- Use the 'How to' briefings in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide to help you design your training.

Background

Besides Trade and Industry, relevant manuals are *Education, Development Planning and Agriculture and Rural Development*.



ACTIVITY D1

Gender imbalance among senior staff

Aim To examine the reasons for the gender imbalance in senior management in the trade sector

Outcomes

- Identify main obstacles to gender balance among senior staff
- Suggest ways of tackling the obstacles, including education and training

Time 40 mins

Materials Flipchart

Steps

- 1 Explain that in this activity, participants are going to look at the imbalances between men and women in policy and decision-making in the ministry of trade and related agencies.
- 2 Remind participants that the government has endorsed many international conventions, declarations and plans of action that commits it to gender mainstreaming. In the trade sector, this means the equal participation of women and men in all aspects of trade (in policy and decision-making, trading operations, access to work opportunities, and upgrading of skills and career development).
- 3 Ask them what gender imbalance they can identify in the ministry of trade and related agencies (example: most senior staff are men while most administrative and clerical staff are women).
- 4 Brainstorm the reasons for this. Write all the participants' ideas on flipchart paper. Prompt them to pull out five main obstacles and group their ideas under these headings if possible. (20 mins)
- 5 Point out that three of the five obstacles identified relate to education and training. Note that a national GMS should take into account links between the trade and education sectors (e.g. trade sector recommending changes/additions to school and university curricula to enable more women to be involved in this area).
- 6 Ask for participants' ideas on tackling the obstacles and discuss. (e.g. note that there would be no point in mandating 50 per cent of senior management posts for women if there were not enough qualified candidates. How can this be addressed?) (20 mins)

Notes

- See page 11 of the Trade and Industry GMS manual for the main obstacles for step 3.

ACTIVITY D2

Aim To examine attitudes towards women in the ministry of trade and related organisations

Outcomes

- Assess and compare perceptions of attitudes towards women
- Suggest ways of improving attitudes

Time 40 minutes

Materials Handout D.2 'Assessment of perceptions'

Steps

- 1 Distribute the handout. Ask participants to fill in their own (honest) assessment of how they perceive the ministry of trade and its related organisations in terms of attitudes to and treatment of women within the organisation(s). They put an X under the number that they feel best represents the attitude; 1 is the most positive and 5 the most negative. (5 mins)
- 2 Ask participants to add up the points they have entered for a minimum of 10 (all ones) and a maximum of 50 (all fives). Then ask for a show of hands from those who had less than 15, then less than 30, then less than 45, then more than 45. (5 mins)
- 3 If most participants have a low or high score (showing a perception of very positive or negative attitudes), ask for specific examples of these attitudes or treatments.
- 4 Have a general discussion of ways the organisation's attitudes could be reinforced (if positive) or improved (if negative). If most participants' answers were in the middle (mainly threes), discuss what could be done to improve things. (20 mins)

Notes

- People may be more willing to discuss positive examples than negative ones and need more encouragement to speak about the latter. There should be agreement that what is said in the room stays there.



Assessment of perceptions

HANDOUT

D.2

Put an 'X' under the number that best reflects the attitude to women.

Positive	1	2	3	4	5	Negative
Shows confidence						Distrustful
Promotes responsibility						Downgrades capacities
Empowering						Hostile
Promotes initiative						Disregards suggestions
Respectful						Disrespectful
Builds confidence						Repressive
Encourages team work						Divisive
Invites work comments						Unwilling to listen
Nurturing						Exploitative
Friendly						Unfriendly

ACTIVITY D3

Challenges faced by women-owned SMEs

Aim To increase awareness of the problems faced by women-owned small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)

Outcomes

- Describe and compare the main challenges to small and medium-sized enterprises
- Identify the factors involved
- Elaborate by means of a short skit

Time 1 1/4 hours

Materials Flipchart and markers, Handout D.3 'Challenges faced by SMEs'

Steps

- 1 Tell participants that this activity will look at some of the challenges faced by women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Many of these are related to lack of access. Ask them what some of these challenges might be. Write them on the flipchart. Prompt participants until you have covered the five areas in the handout. Then write each of the five areas on other sheets of flipchart. (20 mins)
- 2 Divide the participants into five small groups and give each one of the challenges. Ask the groups to come up with three or four factors that hinder women's access and then develop a three-minute skit that demonstrates them. (20 mins)
- 3 Bring the groups back together to present their skit. After each group has performed, ask the other participants what the challenges were that the group identified. What other challenges can they think of in this area? (30 mins)
- 4 Give out copies of the handout. End with a discussion on whether some of the challenges seem easier to deal with than others (e.g. tackling legal obstacles rather than cultural ones; setting up training programmes rather than obtaining access to policy makers). (10 mins)



Challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

HANDOUT
D.3

Challenges faced by SMEs (women intensive)	Challenges faced by women-owned SMEs (women exclusive)
Access to finance and credit -service companies face difficulties due to the nature of their businesses -cost of capital relative to other countries	-discriminatory laws -prejudice against women and women-owned businesses -difficulty in providing collateral (women do not own assets in their own right) -lack of credit/banking history (due to past, informal nature of businesses) -need for credit plus business planning and advisory services
Access to markets -access to quality, up-to-date information -contacts through personal networks -small size of businesses	-prejudice against women -difficulty in travelling to make contacts -sexual harassment
Access to training -technical training -training on World Trade Organisation (WTO) and trade policy and requirements	-training needs are often overlooked -when identified, women's needs may not be met (e.g. time of training, content, method of delivery, child-care provision)
Access to technology -need for reliable telephone and Internet service -potential for e-commerce and e-trade -access to electronic banking and transfers -use of English as the medium of communication through the Internet	-older women/women with low levels of education and literacy are particularly disadvantaged -lack of English language skills -bias against women's involvement in technical matters
Access to policy makers/input into trade policy -large companies and men can more easily influence policy and have access to policy makers who are their peers	- little access to policy makers or representation on policy-making bodies -lack of access to information limits knowledgeable input into policy -few or no contacts in the bureaucracy

(Adapted from Carr, Chen and Jhabvala, 1996.)

ACTIVITY D4

Gender and trade liberalisation

Aim To look at some of the ways in which trade liberalisation impacts differently on women and men

Outcomes

- Describe ways trade liberalisation affects women and men
- Suggest ways of supporting and protecting women and women-owned businesses

Time 1 1/4 hours

Materials Flipchart and markers, Handout D.4a 'Questions on gender and trade liberalisation' and D.4b 'How trade liberalisation may negatively impact on women'

Steps

- 1 Ask participants for a simple definition of trade liberalisation (removing barriers to the free movement of goods and capital across borders). Ask whether they think this would have different effects on women and men.
- 2 In discussion, remind participants of the gender gaps seen in activity D3 in terms of access to credit, information, markets, technology and training. These often make it difficult if not impossible for women to take advantage of trade liberalisation. (5 mins)
- 3 Give out Handout D.4a Divide participants into small groups and tell them to try and answer the questions, based on their own experience and knowledge. Give them flipchart paper and markers. (30 mins)
- 4 Ask each group to post its flipcharts on the wall. Let the other groups walk around and review them. Based on the most promising flipcharts, select one or two groups to report back their discussions. (20 mins)
- 5 Lead a general discussion about trade liberalisation. Distribute Handout D.4b. Ask people to suggest ways in which women and women-owned businesses can be supported and protected. (10 mins)



Questions on gender and trade liberalisation



- 1 What is the balance of male and female employment in sectors that:
 - (a) provide a high proportion of exports and/or are likely to expand under trade liberalisation?
 - (b) are likely to suffer most from import competition (such as food production and clothing)?
- 2 How is trade liberalisation affecting the gender division of labour between and within sectors?
- 3 How will trade liberalisation affect relative conditions between tradeables and other sectors? Are there specific labour or social rights of women that are vulnerable?
- 4 What is happening to women's involvement in trading at local, regional and national levels? Do women and men have equal access to marketing facilities and networks?
- 5 What are the likely impacts of trade-induced price changes (especially in agricultural products) on household expenditures, consumption and poverty levels?
- 6 What are the implications of trade liberalisation for government tariff revenues and spending priorities?
- 7 How do trade rules affect the scope for government or the private sector to take positive measures against gender discrimination?

(Adapted from: Stichele, 1997)

HANDOUT
D.4b

How trade liberalisation may negatively affect women

- Increased competition demands a swifter response to the market, and women generally lack fast and easy access to capital.
- Trade liberalisation often does not take into account women's unpaid reproductive work and their limited access to resources in the household and the wider market economy.
- While women's access to paid employment has increased, many of these jobs in developing countries are in export processing zones (EPZs) or involve outsourcing and an increase in home worker arrangements. This leaves women increasingly vulnerable to capital flight and labour abuses including: long hours, insecure employment, unhealthy conditions, low wages and sexual harassment.
- Gender bias in the labour market means that women are restricted to particular job types and are found mainly in traditionally 'female' work and low-skilled jobs.
- Women's limited access to education and training makes it difficult for them to be competitive in areas that are experiencing rapid technological advances.
- Women have lost jobs in certain sectors, such as traditional agriculture and textiles industries, and in particular countries and regions. In agriculture, there has been a focus on large-scale businesses involved in the export of cash crop agriculture, while women are predominantly small farmers who generally produce food for domestic consumption.
- The reduction or elimination of tariffs and other barriers on agricultural products has led to a dramatic inflow of foreign goods and the loss of market of local producers, most of whom are women.
- The shrinking of the state and the increase of the private sector has led to cuts in public expenditure in services like health, education and welfare benefits. This has a disproportionately negative impact on women because of: (a) unemployment in the public sector; and (b) their primary responsibility for household and community management.
- Withdrawal of subsidies for food production is increasing the insecurity of food production and availability.
- The ability of governments to award contracts on social, environmental or broad economic grounds will be restricted.



ACTIVITY D5

Strategic objectives for promoting gender equality/equity

Aim To look at some of the areas where action is needed for gender equality/equity in the trade sector and come up with ideas for taking action

Outcomes

- Suggest actions to achieve strategic objectives
- Compare and prioritise actions and objectives

Time 1 hour

Materials Handout D.5 'Promoting gender equity in the trade sector', flipchart paper, markers, coloured stickers

Steps

- 1 Explain that a number of strategic objectives have been identified that will promote gender equality/equity in the trade sector. Give participants the handout.
- 2 Divide the participants into five small groups and give them flipchart paper and markers. Ask each group to choose one of the strategic objectives (encourage them to choose different objectives and not the first one). Ask them to come up with three to five points for specific actions to achieve the objectives and write them on the flipchart. Suggest that they read the example on the handout of points for the first objective. (30 mins)
- 3 Bring the group back together and have them post their flipcharts around the room. Provide them with coloured stickers and ask them to walk around the room and put a sticker next to one or two ideas (not their own) that they think would be particularly effective, practical and achievable. (20 mins)
- 4 Have five volunteers count the stickers on each flipchart and give you a total. Ask them to read out the four or five points with the most stickers. Have the group that came up with the idea participants selected as most effective elaborate on it if they want to. Ask for a show of hands about which objective should have the highest priority. Which objective do participants think would be the most difficult to put into action? (10-15 mins)

Notes

- Action points under the strategic objectives can be found on pp 32-36 of the *Trade and Industry* GMS manual.

HANDOUT
D.5

Promoting gender equality/equity in the trade sector

Strategic objectives

- 1 Establish the institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming.
- 2 Undertake gender analysis of existing trade policy documents, as well as those in formulation for the next planning period.
- 3 Review the programme of work of the trade ministry to identify areas where gender discrimination may take place.
- 4 Identify current gender imbalances in the staff of the trade ministry and related areas.
- 5 Undertake training needs analysis.
- 6 Carry out gender sensitisation at all levels.
- 7 Ensure that implementation of trade sector development policy is gender-sensitive.
- 8 Improve interaction between the ministry of trade and the private sector.
- 9 Monitor and evaluate the impact of gender mainstreaming and gender planning.

An example of actions to be taken

- 1 Establish the institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming
 - Set up an in-house gender mainstreaming group reporting directly to the principal secretary. It should be made up of four people (two of each sex) from the middle- and higher-level ranks, since they need clout in influencing the adoption/implementation of strategies.
 - Task them to identify, by department, areas where special attention is needed for gender mainstreaming, and where gender planning and monitoring actions are being undertaken to ensure equality.
 - Make the group part of a government-wide mainstreaming initiative led by the women's ministry/bureau (backed by political will at highest levels).



An example of good practice

Aim To increase awareness of the benefits of integrating women in trade development through an example of good practice

Outcomes

- Identify positives and challenges of export production villages (EPVs)
- Assess whether EPVs would be a useful strategy in the participant's country

Time 1 hour

Materials Handout D.6 'Export production villages (EPVs)', flipchart paper, markers

Steps

- 1 Give each participant a copy of the handout.
- 2 Divide participants into small groups. Ask them to read the handout and come up with a list of positive results that the EPVs generate (e.g. income-generating opportunities for rural women) and challenges that the projects potentially face (e.g. women's limited management skills).
- 3 Encourage them to draw on their own experiences as well as the handout. Give them flipchart paper and markers for their answers. (30 mins)
- 4 Bring everyone back to the plenary. Ask one group to present its list of positive results. Then seek agreement and other ideas from the other groups. Ask another group to present the challenges and let the other groups respond. (20 minutes)
- 5 Discuss with participants whether EPVs would be a useful strategy in their country. If they already exist, discuss to what extent they have had positive results. (10 minutes)

Notes

- Possible positives
 - create rural-based employment
 - reduce poverty
 - integrate women in trade development
 - promote women's entrepreneurship
 - develop managerial skills of women
 - transfer new technology to rural areas
 - develop marketing abilities
 - accelerate private investment
 - enable the more economical purchase of raw materials
 - allow promotional and publicity costs to be shared
 - provide the volume of products required by the buyer
 - help women find assistance within their own group for trade negotiations and communications
 - stem urban drift
- Possible challenges
 - products need to be adapted or changed
 - older/semi-literate women may have difficulty with new technologies
 - women's limited management capacity – need for training
 - women's lack of access to financial services
 - women's limited knowledge of business English

HANDOUT**D.6**

Export production villages (EPVs)

The export production village (EPV) is a vehicle for rural-based employment creation, poverty reduction, integrating women in trade development and promoting women's entrepreneurship – all important elements of sustainable human development. Excepting primary commodities, exports of developing countries have been mainly urban and have particularly offered employment to city dwellers. Recognising that in many countries around 80 per cent of the population is rural (and therefore for geographic reasons normally unable to find work in new urban export processing zones), some governments have established policies to make the development of exports more relevant and meaningful, especially to poorer communities in the rural sector.

In the past, agricultural and rural cottage industry sectors supplied only domestic market needs. Although the domestic market was small and purchasing power low, so long as they could sell their output, these enterprises were content and felt no need to improve either their technologies or the quality of their products. They were also protected through both tariffs and import restrictions. Now, however, new trade policies have reduced the level of protection and liberalised commerce, meaning that these rural producers have been faced with massive competition. The only solution for them is to widen their market horizons, requiring at the same time product adaptation or change, the transfer of new technology, the improvement of financial and organisational structures, and management upgrading. Such transformation processes benefit the rural sector comprising women to a large extent, by exploiting its under-utilised production capacity and underemployed workforce.

The strategy adopted in the EPV programme is to:

- develop a viable and commercially oriented village institution, capable of mobilising the production capacity of the small producer, and build up a new supply source of exportable products;
- link the village institution with an established exporter and encourage and support both parties to build up and sustain a meaningful business relationship; and
- assist the producers' institution in supply development, and the exporter in market development.

In general terms, countries that have consciously adopted measures to link rural development with export development have reaped considerable rewards. As a result of most EPV programmes, export earnings have increased to the benefit of the countries and their rural populations. Of more importance are the far-reaching qualitative improvements in the structures and character of the rural sector, such as the emergence of new entrepreneurs, better managerial skills, the transfer of new technology, the development of marketing abilities and the acceleration of private investment. Positive examples of the EPV concept – benefiting both women and men – can be found in Ghana, India, Sri Lanka and a number of other countries.

Another form of co-operative venture is that which women have adopted in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, producing tapestries, rugs and similar hand-woven products for export. Each company is small, with a modest output; in addition, some owners have a limited knowledge of business English, which has hampered their efforts to find new markets and deal with potential overseas buyers. By grouping together, they can buy raw materials more economically, share promotional and publicity costs, provide the volume of products required by the buyer, and find assistance within their own group for trade negotiations and communications.