



Making the United Kingdom-India CETA Work for Women:

Opportunities, Risks
and Policy Pathways

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List of abbreviations

Note: Unless otherwise specified, \$ denotes the currency of the United States of America.

CEDAW – United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women

CEPA – Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

CETA – Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement

FTA – Free Trade Agreement

ITC – International Trade Centre

MSME – micro, small and medium-sized enterprise

SDG – Sustainable Development Goal

SME – small and medium-sized enterprise

STEM – science, technology, engineering and mathematics

UK – United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

WTO – World Trade Organization



Executive summary

WHY DOES THE UK-INDIA CETA MATTER FOR WOMEN?

The Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) and India provides a historic framework for bilateral cooperation to promote women's participation in trade, through a dedicated chapter on Trade and Gender Equality that promotes improved access to finance, skills and digital trade, as well as the establishment of a Trade and Gender Equality Working Group to monitor commitments.

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM THE CETA FOR INDIAN WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES?

- Five sectors offer the greatest potential for export growth for India to the UK under CETA: apparel and textiles (\$0.9 billion), gems and jewellery (\$237 million), electronics and machinery (\$1.3 billion), chemicals and pharmaceuticals (\$0.9 billion), and horticulture, processed food, and beverages (\$589 million), amounting to \$3.9 billion. CETA's provisions—including elimination of tariff lines, trade facilitation measures, standards and certifications, and rules of origin—can support Indian businesses to tap into unrealized export potential.
- Apparel and textiles represent one of the most immediate opportunities under CETA. Women also constitute most of the production workforce in the sector, signalling opportunities for growth. However, barriers such as lack of control over the export process; social constraints; and lack of access to finance, networks and information prevent women from capturing export gains arising from CETA. Women face similar constraints in the gems and jewellery, horticulture, processed food, and beverages sectors.
- The electronics and machinery, and pharmaceutical and chemicals sectors also see export growth opportunities arising from CETA. However, benefits for women in these sectors will remain limited unless women's participation in these industries increases.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CETA?

- Translating CETA's provisions into positive outcomes for women requires four targeted actions:
 1. Implementing the gender provisions of the UK-India CETA with the help of a targeted action plan, establishment of sector-specific trade councils for women, building a networking platform for women-led businesses, and providing targeted assistance.
 2. Strengthening the trade environment for women exporters, including simplifying regulatory processes; expanding testing infrastructure for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); investing in gender-responsive logistical infrastructure; improving awareness of existing support schemes; and improving access to finance for women.
 3. Addressing structural barriers to women's participation in trade through recognizing the lack of care infrastructure, and addressing mobility and safety concerns.
 4. Adopting the SheTrades Outlook tool to support CETA implementation. This will establish a baseline to identify policy gaps and strengths, inform sector-specific action plans, convene public-and private-sector stakeholders to align and coordinate efforts, and enable transparent monitoring of progress under the agreement.

1 Introduction: Context and objectives

1.1 Background on the United Kingdom-India Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement

The UK-India CETA, signed on 24 July 2025, is the institutional culmination of a four-year negotiation. Formal negotiations opened on 13 January 2022, following the 2021 Enhanced Trade Partnership between Prime Ministers Modi and Johnson, with an agreement in principle reached on 6 May 2025 after 14 rounds of talks. India is the UK's fourth largest export market; the UK is India's eleventh largest trading partner, with total bilateral trade worth £47.4 billion (\$63.6 billion) annually (UK Department for Business and Trade, 2026).

The agreement enters into force 60 days after both parties complete domestic ratification, for which no fixed timeline has been set.

Ratification of CETA requires both governments to complete their respective domestic legal processes, including parliamentary scrutiny, before the agreement enters into force. Implementation will demand coordinated action across ministries, regulatory bodies and trade facilitation institutions to operationalize commitments across tariffs, services and standards. Critically, CETA provides for the establishment of 10 working groups, including a dedicated Trade and Gender Equality Working Group, tasked with translating CETA commitments into action plans, monitoring progress and reporting to the Joint Committee (UK Department of Business and Trade, 2025a).

1.2 Objectives of the paper

This paper examines how the UK-India CETA can translate its gender commitments into tangible economic opportunities for women, highlighting the Trade and Gender Equality chapter as a framework to strengthen women's participation in trade.

It identifies sectors with the greatest export potential – apparel and textiles, gems and jewellery, electronics and machinery, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, and horticulture, processed food, and beverages – and analyses the structural, regulatory and market barriers that limit women's ability to benefit from new market access opportunities.

The paper also proposes priority policy actions to support inclusive implementation of the Agreement, including:

- A Gender Action Plan under the Trade and Gender Equality Working Group
- Targeted support for women-led MSMEs
- Improved access to trade finance and buyer networks
- Gender-responsive infrastructure
- The use of SheTrades Outlook to monitor progress and inform policy reforms.



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BOX 1 The United Kingdom's experience in advancing inclusive trade

The UK has been a leader in advancing gender-responsive trade policy at both bilateral and multilateral levels. Bilaterally, the Department for Business and Trade has incorporated dedicated gender or women's economic empowerment chapters in several recent free trade agreements (FTAs), including with Japan (2020), the European Economic Area European Free Trade Association (2021), Australia (2021) and New Zealand (2022), alongside efforts to mainstream gender considerations across other trade provisions. The UK-India CETA represents the most advanced application of this approach.

At the multilateral level, the UK has championed gender equality in trade through the World Trade Organization (WTO), G7, G20 and the United Nations. Under the former UK Ambassador's co-chairing of the WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender, it has supported initiatives such as the Buenos Aires and Abu Dhabi Declarations, the Compendium of Financial Inclusion Initiatives for Women Entrepreneurs, and the WTO International Prize for Gender Equality in Trade.

These commitments are operationalized through programmes funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office,

including the SheTrades Commonwealth+ Programme implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC). Since its launch in 2018, the programme has generated over £45 million in sales for women-owned businesses and supported more than 6,600 jobs, over 70% of which went to women.

Through the programme, ITC has established SheTrades Hubs – resource centres hosted by national institutions that provide women entrepreneurs with training, mentoring and market links. The SheTrades India Hub, launched in 2025 at the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, supports women-led MSMEs in priority sectors such as agrifood, and textiles and apparel. In February 2026, the Hub organized a trade mission bringing 13 Indian women-led businesses to the UK to engage directly with buyers.

The programme also provides data and policy insights through the SheTrades Outlook tool, which assesses the enabling environment for women in trade across 65 countries. Using its findings, ITC and the UK have supported 20 countries to strengthen gender-responsive trade policies, with 12 already adopting reforms. The tool can similarly help identify policy priorities and support monitoring of the gender provisions under the UK-India CETA.



The United Kingdom-India Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

2.1. Salient features of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

Trade can advance gender equality, as firms integrated into global value chains employ more women and offer better pay and benefits, yet women remain underrepresented in international trade. While trade and gender provisions were once rare at the multilateral level, bilateral FTAs have become the main avenue for operationalizing them. Countries such as Chile, Canada and the UK, as well as the European Union, are leading efforts to integrate gender provisions in trade agreements and institutionalize them across trade policy to ensure alignment between international commitments and domestic practice.

The UK-India CETA includes the first stand-alone Trade and Gender Equality chapter ever negotiated by India in a trade agreement. The chapter aims to enhance women's participation in global, regional and domestic economies – as workers, entrepreneurs and business owners – through four core elements: recognition of structural barriers, cooperation activities, an institutional mechanism, and commitments on gender-disaggregated data. Salient areas include the following.

- **Recognition of structural barriers** – The chapter explicitly acknowledges structural barriers that limit women's economic participation, including the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work, marking the first time India has adopted this framing in a trade agreement. It also recognizes the diverse experiences of women in trade, including those from marginalized and economically vulnerable communities, and promotes measures to address care economy constraints such as workplace flexibility; shared household responsibilities; and cooperation on research, best-practice exchange and joint initiatives on trade and gender equality.
- **Support for MSMEs and women-led enterprises** – The chapter commits to strengthening the competitiveness of MSMEs and women-led enterprises through improved access to skills, capacity building, and information and technology; and supports their participation in regional and global value chains. It also promotes financial inclusion, financial literacy and access to trade finance, addressing key constraints faced by women-led businesses.

- **Market access and trade promotion initiatives** – To support women entrepreneurs’ participation in trade, the chapter includes provisions for trade missions and trade promotion initiatives targeting women-led businesses. One example of operationalizing this is the SheTrades trade mission to the UK in February 2026, which connected Indian women-led enterprises with UK buyers.
- **Skills, digital inclusion and innovation** – The chapter promotes women’s participation and leadership in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); innovation; and digital trade, recognizing the growing importance of digital markets for expanding women’s economic opportunities.
- **Institutional mechanism for implementation** – Implementation is overseen by the Trade and Gender Equality Working Group, which is responsible for coordinating cooperation activities, monitoring progress and reporting to the Joint Committee. Its mandate extends across other committees – including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), digital trade, financial services and trade facilitation – and allows engagement with external stakeholders such as women entrepreneurs and civil society.
- **Cooperative governance framework** – As with most gender chapters in FTAs, the provisions are not subject to dispute settlement, reflecting their cooperative character. This places greater emphasis on the Working Group’s design, priorities and coordination across committees to ensure effective implementation.
- **Gender provisions across other chapters** – Gender-relevant commitments are also embedded across several other chapters of CETA. The labour chapter promotes efforts to address workplace discrimination and improve working conditions. The SME chapter supports cooperation and information-sharing to reduce barriers faced by smaller firms. The financial services chapter promotes diversity in finance, while the digital trade chapter advances paperless trade and digital systems that can reduce procedural barriers. Chapters on technical barriers to trade, government procurement, innovation, and trade and development cooperation provide additional avenues to advance gender-responsive trade outcomes and translate the Agreement’s commitments into concrete opportunities for women.

2.2. Gender-responsiveness of the United Kingdom-India CETA

Assessed against the ITC SheTrades Outlook maturity framework for gender-responsiveness in FTAs (ITC, n.d.b), the UK-India CETA reaches the ‘Advanced’ threshold across most dimensions. The chapter goes beyond general commitments by explicitly recognizing structural barriers to women’s economic participation, including the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work. It also provides substantive cooperation provisions covering market access, skills, digital inclusion, financial literacy and trade missions, and establishes a Trade and Gender Equality Working Group with a broad mandate to monitor implementation and engage other committees and stakeholders. The chapter further commits to the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data, strengthening the evidence base for policy action.

Compared with other gender-responsive FTAs – including Chile-Uruguay (2016), UK-Japan (2020), UK-Australia (2021) and UK-New Zealand (2022) – CETA provides one of the most comprehensive institutional architectures, particularly through the reach of its Working Group across multiple chapters of the agreement. However, as with other agreements, implementation mechanisms remain largely cooperative: none require quantitative targets, gender action plans or financial incentives for women traders. The effectiveness of CETA will therefore depend on how the Working Group operationalizes its mandate, including the development of a gender action plan and gender-disaggregated monitoring mechanisms.

India and the United Kingdom's bilateral trade and investment trends

Trade between India and the UK has nearly tripled over the past decade, reaching **£47.4 billion in 2025 from 2015** (Office for National Statistics et al., 2026). **The fastest-growing export categories from India are electrical machinery and mechanical appliances**, which together account for almost a quarter of India's goods exports and have grown by 84% since 2021/22. **Apparel and textiles represent about 11% of exports** (see Figure 1) (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, 2026). The UK runs a persistent trade deficit with India, widening from £2.6 billion in 2015 to £9.6 billion in 2025. The UK Government estimates that CETA could increase bilateral trade by £25.5 billion annually in the long term (UK Department of Business and Trade, 2025a).

Services trade has also expanded rapidly and now makes up most of the relationship on the UK export side. **UK imports of services from India reached £14.6 billion in 2023/24, up from £7.0 billion in 2021/22, driven mainly by business services (£9.3 billion) and telecommunications, computer and information services (£1.7 billion)** (see Figure 3) (UK Department of Business and Trade, 2025a). CETA locks in market access across several sectors, including financial services, environmental services, construction, telecommunications and professional services, representing commitments India has not previously made in a bilateral agreement.

Investment flows reflect the growing depth of the economic relationship. UK foreign direct investment in India reached £19.1 billion in 2024, a 10% increase from 2023. At the same time, India was the second-largest source of foreign direct investment projects in the UK in 2023/24, creating more than 7,500 jobs (Office for National Statistics, HM Revenue and Customs, and UK Department for Business and Trade, "UK-India Trade and Investment Statistics"). According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, **Indian exports to the UK already support 2.3 million jobs in India, a figure expected to grow as CETA expands market access** (Office for National Statistics et al., 2026). The agreement also forms part of a broader framework of cooperation, including the UK-India 2030 Roadmap, the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and the 2024 Technology Security Initiative.

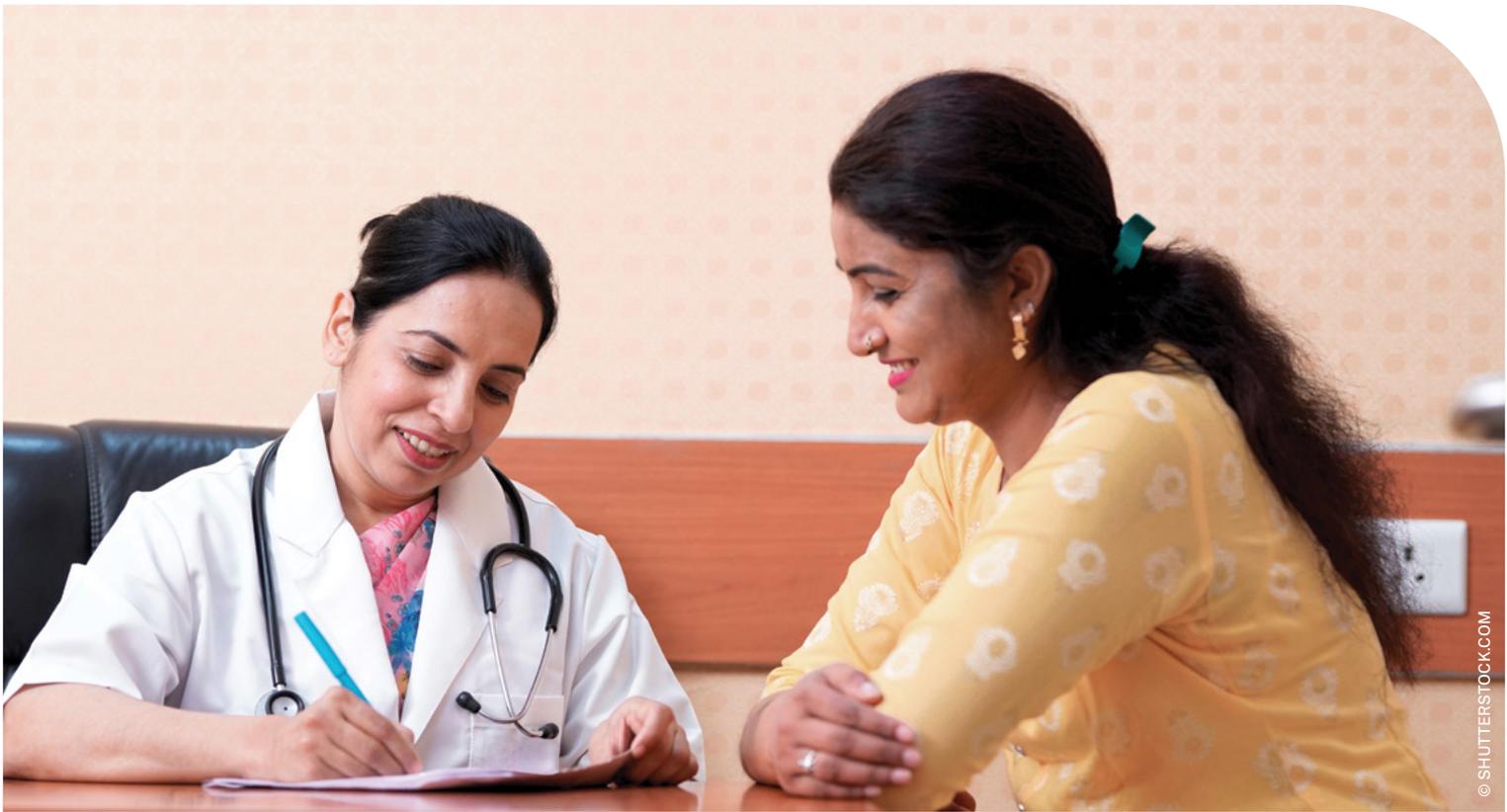
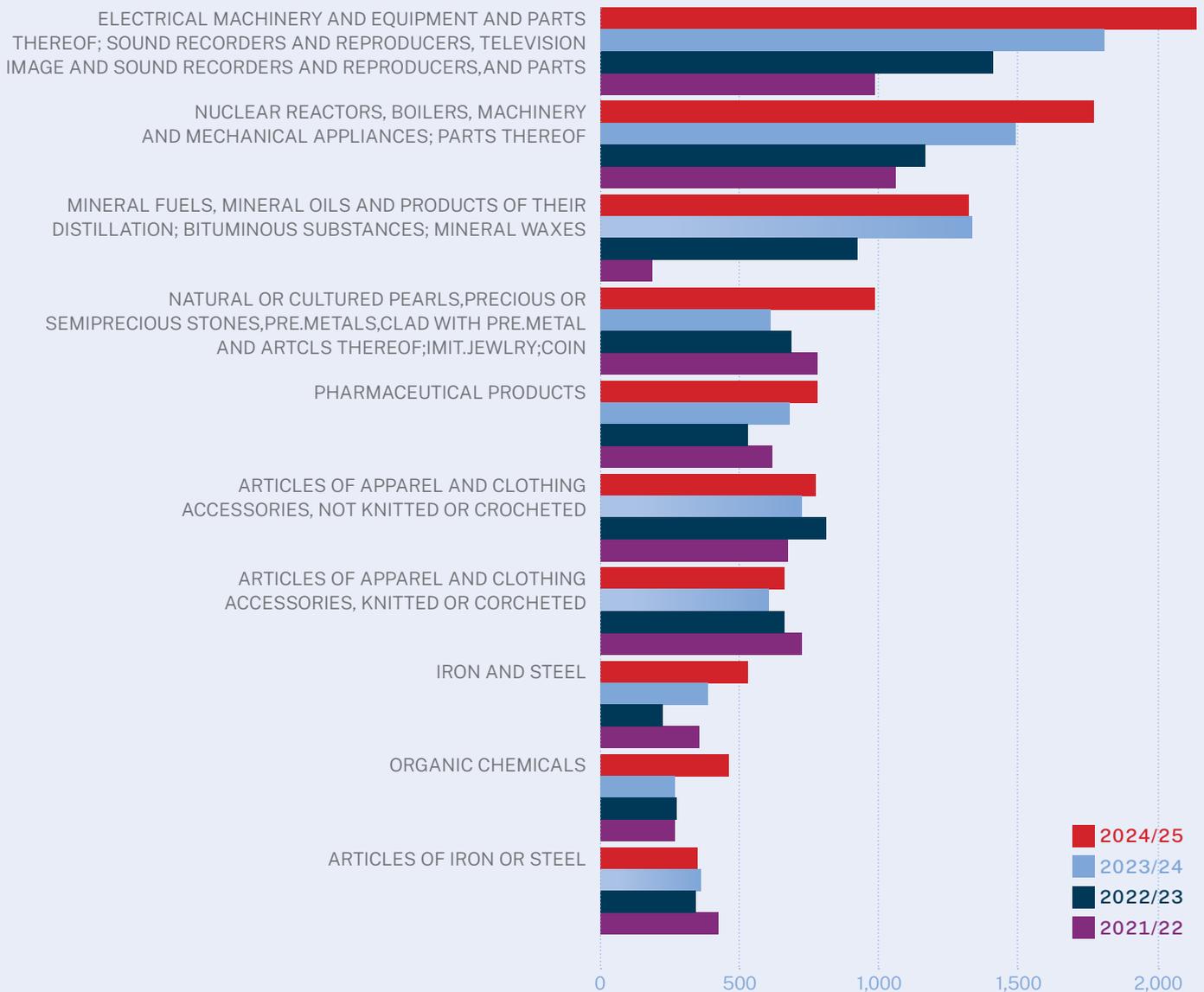
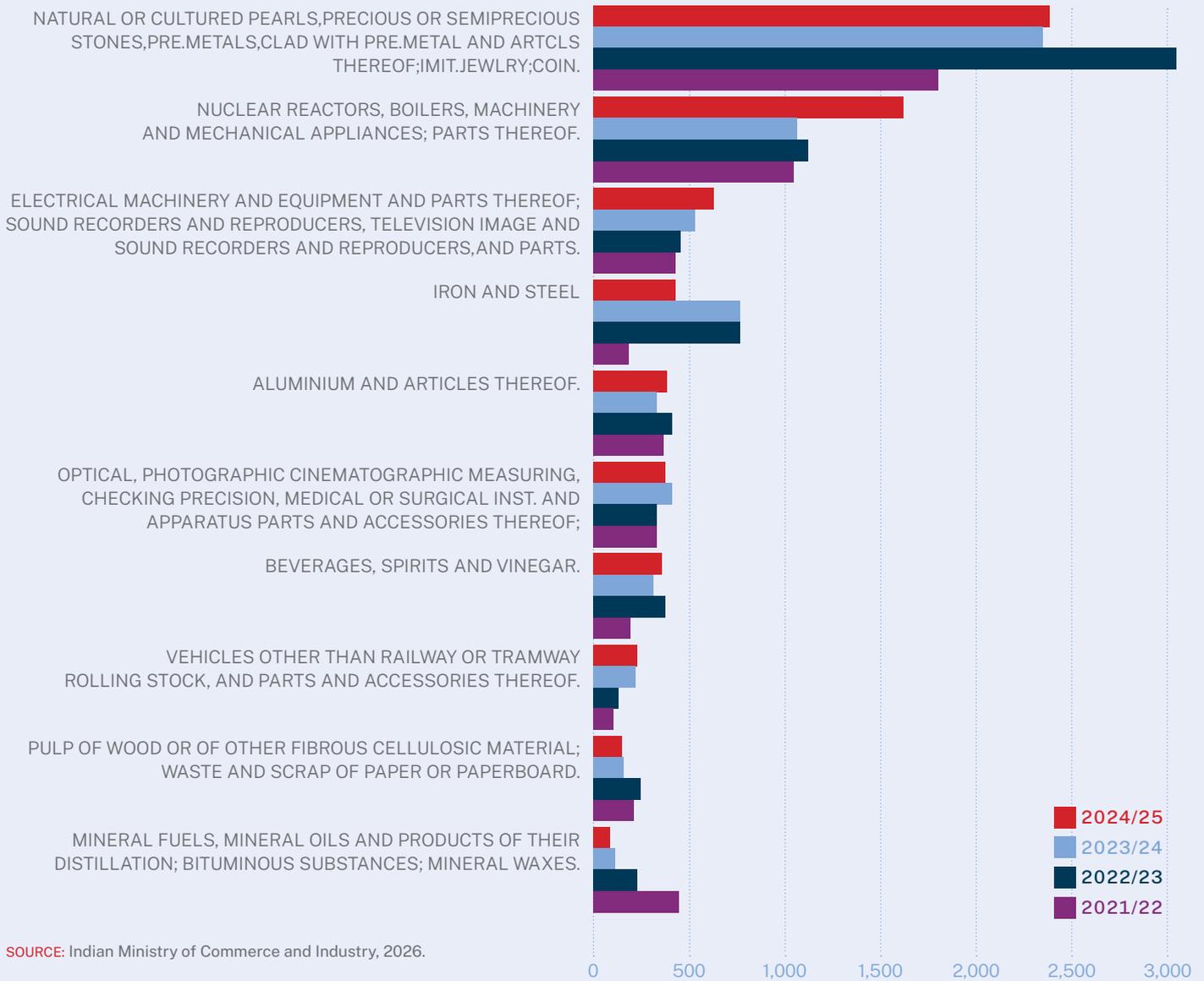


FIGURE 1 India's top 10 goods exports to the United Kingdom, 2021–2025 (£ millions)



SOURCE: Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2026.

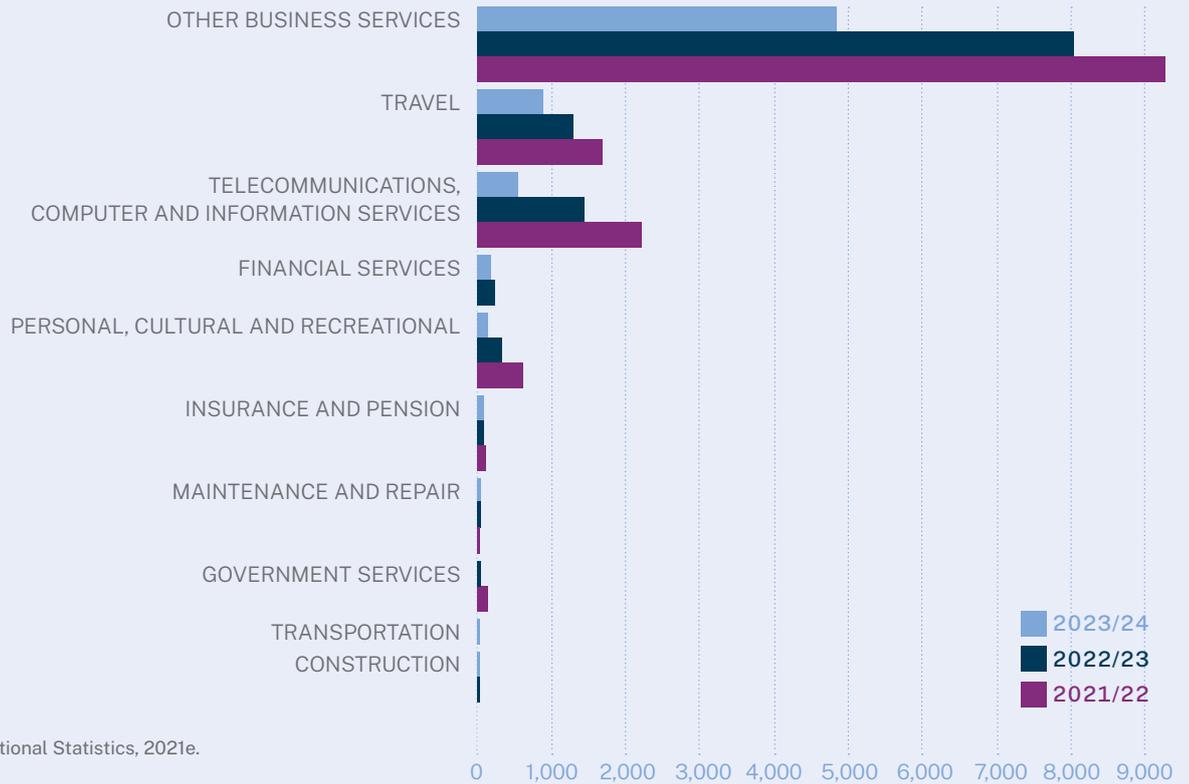
FIGURE 2 India's top 10 goods imports from the United Kingdom, 2021–2025 (£ millions)



SOURCE: Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2026.

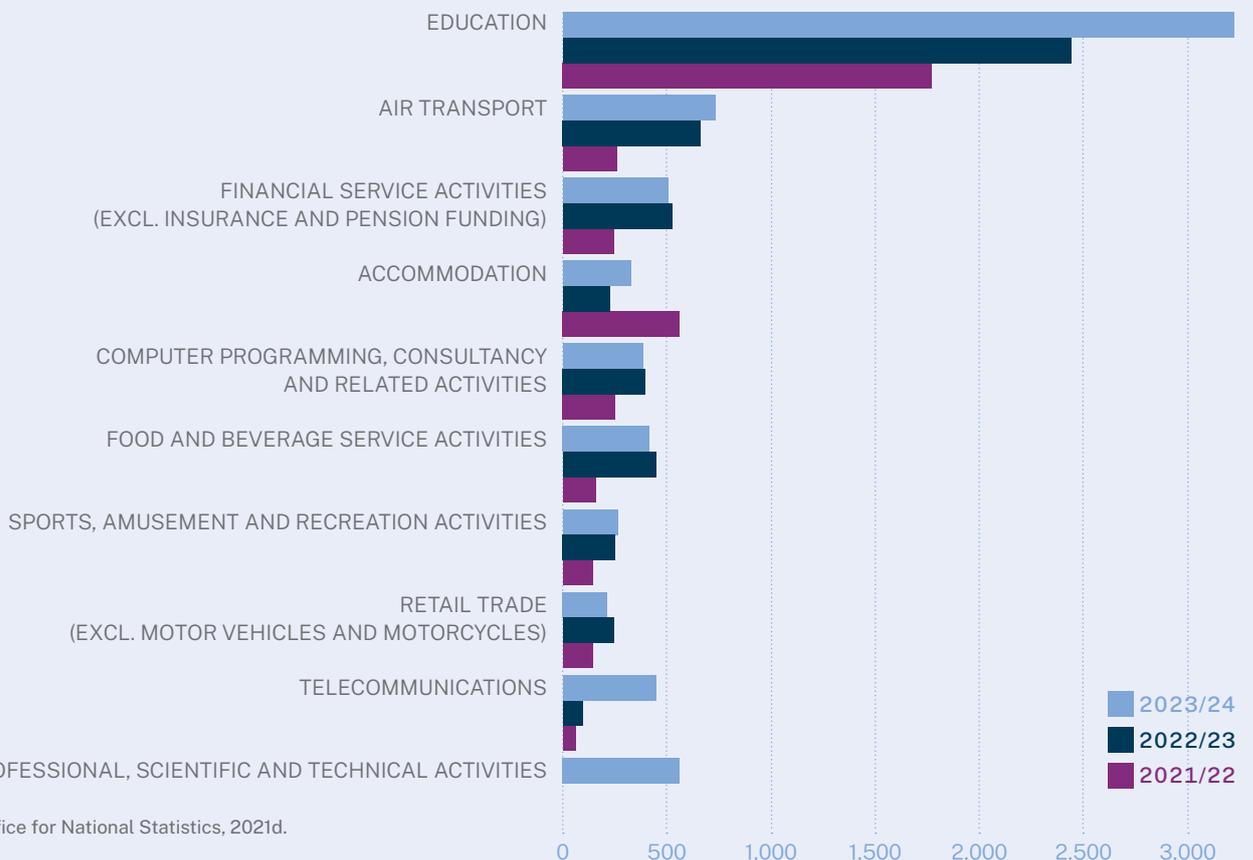


FIGURE 3 India's top 10 services exports to the United Kingdom, 2021–2024 (£ millions)



SOURCE: UK Office for National Statistics, 2021e.

FIGURE 4 India's top 10 services imports from the United Kingdom, 2021–2024 (£ millions)



SOURCE: UK Office for National Statistics, 2021d.

4 India's high-potential export sectors and products in the United Kingdom market

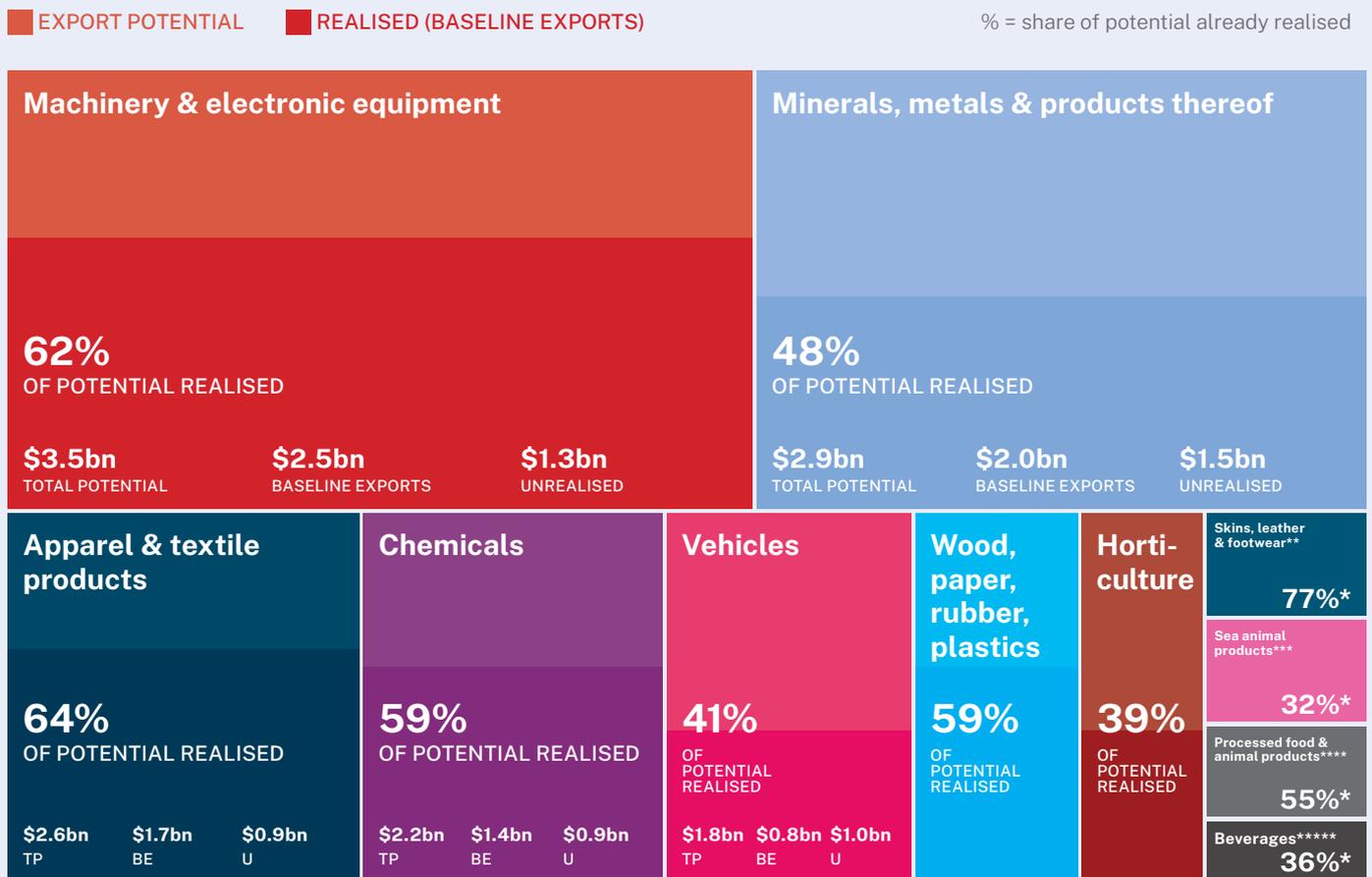
To identify where the UK-India CETA is likely to have the greatest impact, it is necessary to examine both India's current export strengths and areas where untapped potential exists in the UK market. Between 2021 and 2024, five sectors –electrical machinery and electronics, mechanical appliances, apparel and textiles, gems and jewellery, and pharmaceuticals–accounted for more than half of India's goods exports to the UK.

Analysis using the ITC Export Potential Map confirms that these sectors combine strong existing export performance with significant additional market potential (see Figure 5). CETA's provisions on tariff elimination, regulatory cooperation, trade facilitation and SME support are expected to reduce market access barriers and expand bilateral trade flows. However, the extent to which these opportunities translate into inclusive gains, particularly for women, will depend on how sector-specific implementation challenges are addressed. Five sectors emerge as priorities for CETA-enabled growth:

- **Electronics and machinery:** Indian businesses can take advantage of \$1.3 billion of unrealized export potential in this sector, which CETA provisions can unlock through standards and conformity assessment that can reduce non-tariff barriers and ease market entry.
- **Apparel and textiles:** India has an unrealized export potential of \$0.9 billion to the UK in this sector. The elimination of tariffs of up to 12% as a result of CETA can strengthen the price competitiveness of Indian exporters in the UK market and help unlock these export opportunities.
- **Pharmaceuticals and chemicals:** Similar to the apparel and textile industry, Indian businesses can take advantage of \$0.9 billion in export potential to the UK, which CETA can support through regulatory cooperation provisions in this sector that are expected to lower compliance costs and streamline approvals.
- **Processed food, horticulture and beverages:** These sectors present a combined total unrealized export potential of \$589 million, which CETA can help realize through trade facilitation commitments that reduce Customs delays and border frictions.
- **Gems and jewellery:** Indian businesses have the opportunity to tap into \$237 million of export potential in the gems and jewellery sector. CETA includes tariff elimination and rules of origin provisions that will reinforce India's already strong position in the UK market in this sector.



FIGURE 5 India's export potential to the United Kingdom



NOTE: Export potential is an estimate of the potential \$ value of exports that can be achieved for a given exporter (i), product (k) and market (j) in a specific year, for established export products. Unrealized potential is the extent to which potential exports deviate from baseline exports, also known as unrealized potential. Potential exports may be higher or lower than baseline exports. If unrealized potential is positive it represents opportunity for export growth. Potential realized captures the extent to which the export potential has already been realized for a product, market or supplier, and is expressed as a share of total export potential. It is the difference between export potential and unrealized potential, expressed as a share of total export potential. When unrealized potential is zero, realized potential is 100%.

***OF POTENTIAL REALISED**

** \$387 – TOTAL POTENTIAL
\$395 – BASELINE EXPORTS
\$90 – UNREALISED

*** \$410 – TOTAL POTENTIAL
\$133 – BASELINE EXPORTS
\$281 – UNREALISED

**** \$218 – TOTAL POTENTIAL
\$248 – BASELINE EXPORTS
\$127 – UNREALISED

***** \$170 – TOTAL POTENTIAL
\$64 – BASELINE EXPORTS
\$110 – UNREALISED

SOURCE: [ITC Export Potential Map](#).



Women's participation in India's economy and key export sectors

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Women's participation in the labour force in India is rising but this increase is not occurring in export-oriented sectors. India's female labour-force participation rate rose to 41.7% in 2023/24 from 32.5% in 2021/22, the fastest increase since the Periodic Labour Force Survey began. However, the growth is largely rural and agricultural, with 64% of women workers still employed in agriculture (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, 2024). In contrast, women's participation in urban manufacturing, the sector most connected to exports, has remained flat at around 24%, while recent employment gains have occurred mainly in domestic work, accommodation and food services, sectors that are largely disconnected from export markets (see Figure 6).

Even within manufacturing, women's employment only partially overlaps with India's export priorities. **Apparel and textiles, where women are most concentrated, are also the sectors receiving the largest tariff reductions under CETA. Yet these are highly competitive sectors with thin margins. By contrast, the sectors expected to absorb the largest export growth – which are electronics, machinery and pharmaceuticals – have extremely low female employment shares, each below 0.2% nationally** (see Figure 7). This reflects structural barriers including technical skill requirements, industrial location constraints, male-dominated industry networks, and gendered education pathways. Field research shows women concentrated in assembly and support roles, but largely absent from the core manufacturing functions that generate export value (Karmannya Counsel et al., 2025).

A similar pattern appears in services. Women’s employment is concentrated in sectors such as construction, government services, and personal or cultural services, where UK import demand from India is relatively limited. Meanwhile, the sectors that dominate India’s service exports to the UK, such as other business services and telecommunications, computer and information services, remain less accessible to women due to skills gaps, financing constraints and limited access to professional networks (see Figure 8).

Women’s participation in trade is further constrained by informality and value-chain dynamics. Women own 70.5% of informal micro enterprises, yet formal registration is required to export (Ministry of MSMEs, Government of India, 2024). Among formally registered firms, 99% of women-owned MSMEs are micro enterprises, which account for only 24% of MSME exports (Karmannya Counsel et al., 2025).

Even where women work in export sectors, they are concentrated in production rather than higher-value roles. In apparel and craft sectors, women produce while men control pricing, buyers and logistics. In information technology and business process outsourcing, women represent 51% of entry-level employees but fewer than 1% of C-suite roles (NASSCOM, n.d.).

As a result, rising labour participation does not translate into trade-relevant employment, and without targeted policies to move women into export-oriented sectors and higher-value roles, expanded market access risks becoming trade expansion without inclusion.

FIGURE 6 Female labour-force participation rate by industry, 2021–2024 (%)

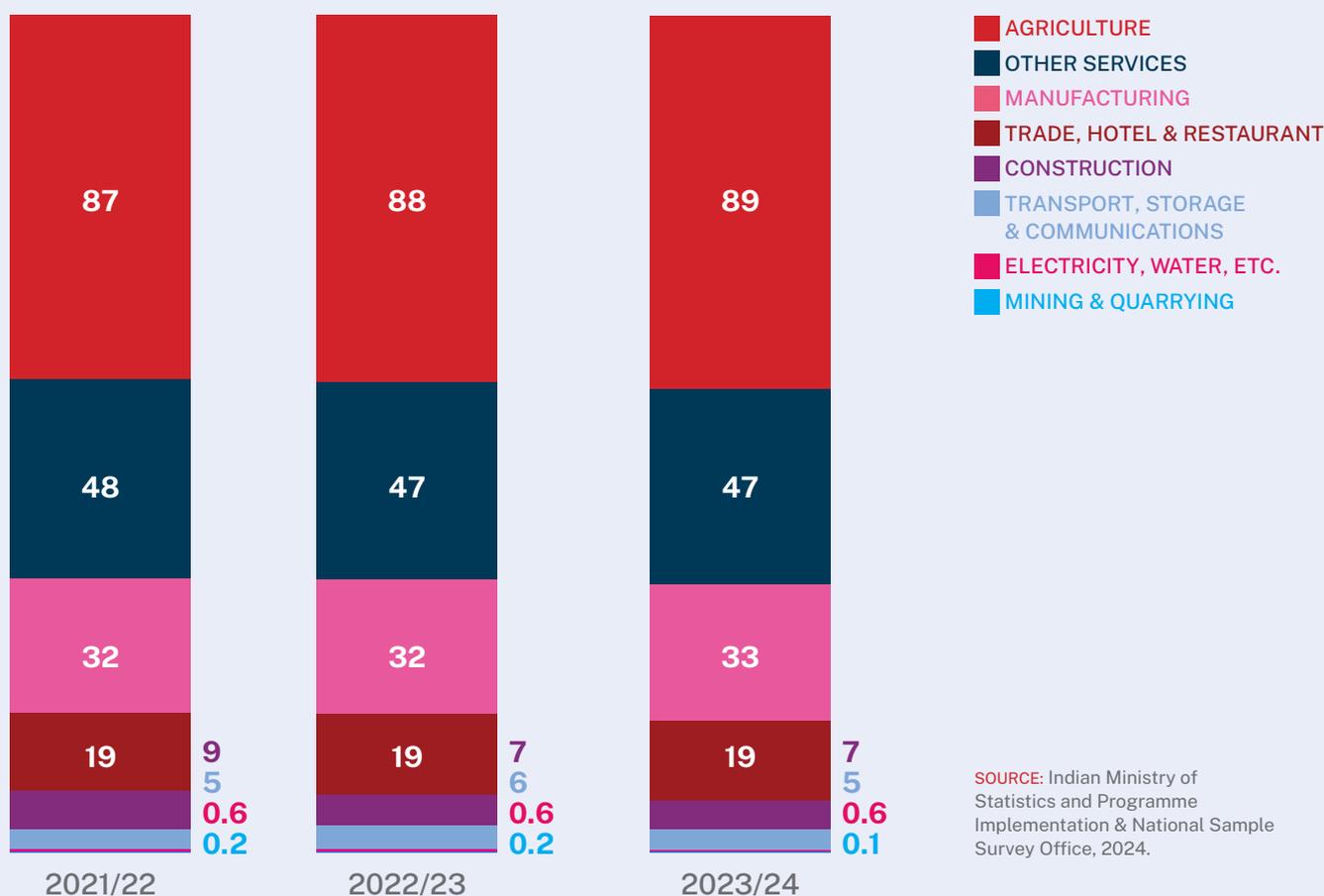
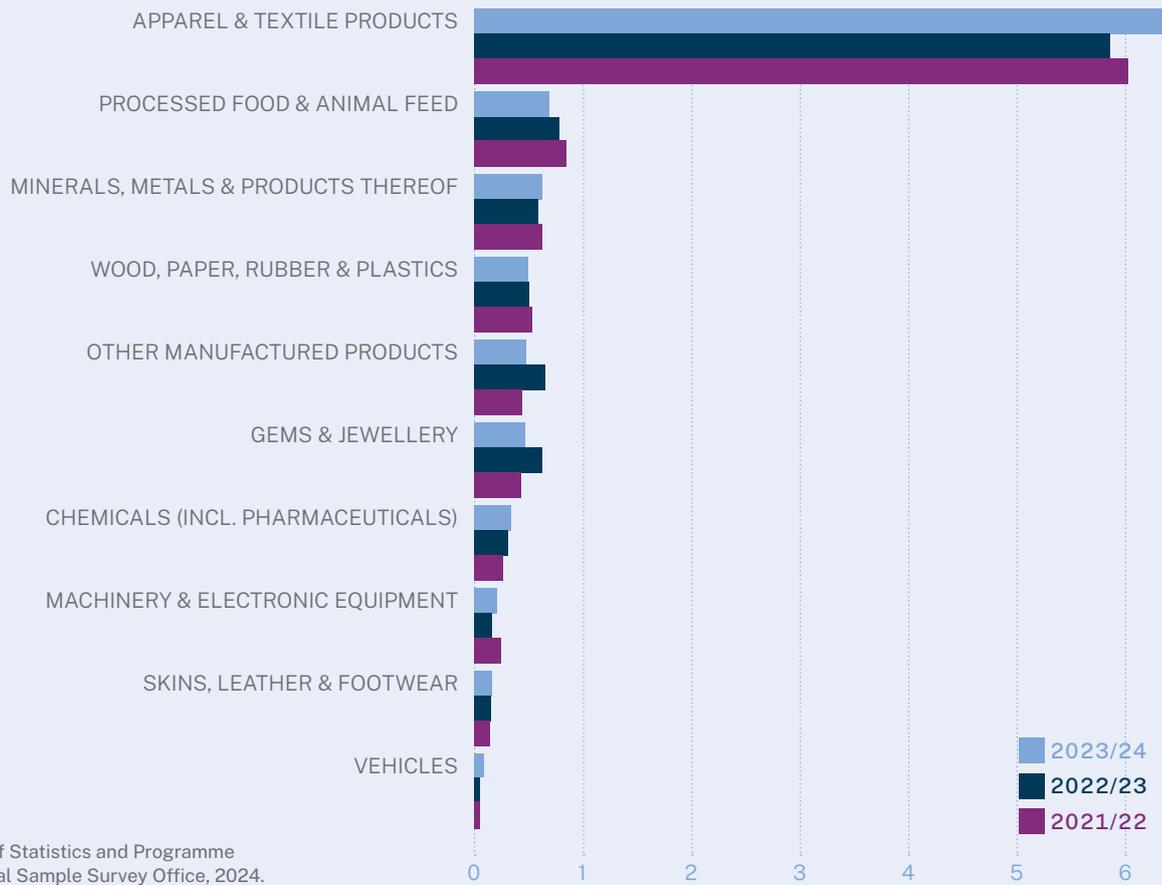
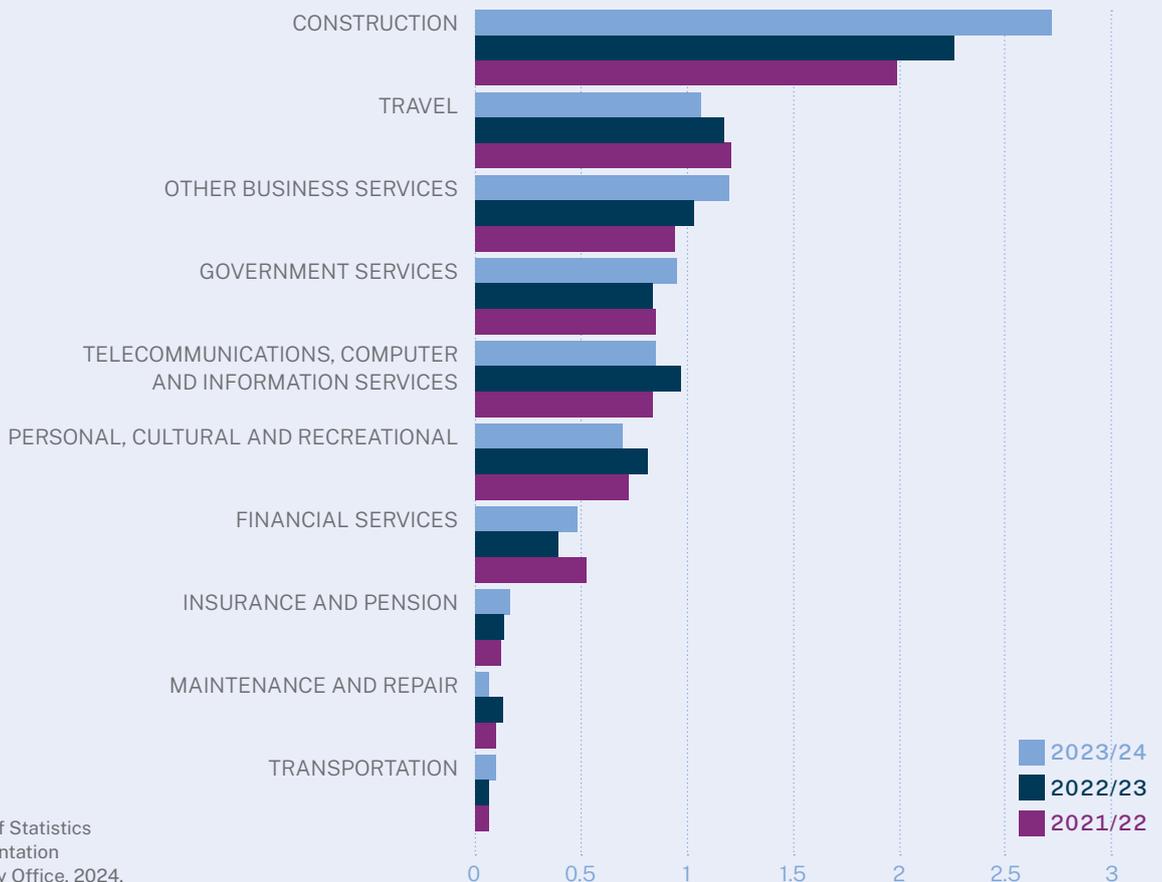


FIGURE 7 Female labour-force participation rate in India's top manufacturing sectors exported to the United Kingdom, 2021–2024 (%)



SOURCE: Indian Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation & National Sample Survey Office, 2024.

FIGURE 8 Female labour-force participation rate in India's top services sectors exported to the United Kingdom, 2021–2024 (%)



SOURCE: Indian Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation & National Sample Survey Office, 2024.

Women in key export sectors under the UK-India CETA: Opportunities and constraints

Apparel and textiles

Apparel and textiles represent one of the most immediate opportunities under CETA. The agreement eliminates tariffs across 1,143 tariff lines, removing UK duties of 8–12% and creating an estimated \$1.35 billion in additional annual export potential for India on top of the current \$0.9 billion export potential (UK Department of Business and Trade, 2025a).

In addition to tariff reductions, the agreement introduces several measures that can ease export procedures. The Customs chapter commits to releasing goods within 48 hours of arrival, allowing duty payments to be deferred for eligible traders; and improving transparency by publishing Customs regulations online in English. The SME chapter also includes provisions on cooperation and information-sharing that can help smaller exporters navigate market entry requirements.

Women constitute a large share of the production workforce in apparel and textiles. However, export contracts, buyer relationships and logistics management are predominantly controlled by men, meaning that tariff gains alone are unlikely to shift women's position within the value chain. The gender chapter's provision for trade missions targeting women entrepreneurs is intended to address this by connecting women producers directly with UK buyers. To be effective, these initiatives will need clear design, dedicated funding and targeted outreach to women producers who currently operate outside the formal export pipeline.

Gems, jewellery, footwear and home textiles

In sectors such as gems and jewellery, footwear and home textiles, India already holds a strong position in the UK market. CETA's duty-free access is expected to reinforce this advantage and support further export expansion.

For many firms in these sectors, the key barriers relate less to tariffs and more to certification requirements and access to market information. The chapter on technical barriers to trade, which promotes mutual recognition of conformity assessment bodies, can reduce certification costs that often constrain smaller exporters. Similarly, the SME chapter's commitments to improve access to trade information and establish contact points can help firms navigate regulatory requirements in the UK market (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, 2025).

For women entrepreneurs, the main constraint is often their position within the value chain rather than market access itself. Women frequently participate in production activities but remain excluded from export management, pricing decisions and buyer negotiations. The gender chapter's commitments to enhance the competitiveness of women-owned enterprises through skills development and capacity-building offer an entry point to address these gaps, but effective implementation will require targeted programmes focusing on certification support, market intelligence and direct buyer engagement.



Electronics and machinery

The opportunity in electronics and machinery lies in expanding India's participation in rapidly growing technology-intensive trade. CETA's provisions on standards cooperation and mutual recognition of conformity assessment bodies can help reduce non-tariff barriers and lower compliance costs for exporters. The Agreement's innovation chapter also establishes a framework for bilateral cooperation in advanced industries.

However, women's participation in these sectors remains extremely limited. Female employment shares are below 0.2%, indicating that the challenge is not simply expanding existing participation but building women's presence in the sector from the ground up (National Sample Survey Office and Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, "Annual Report", PLFS, 2023-24). Market access provisions alone will therefore have limited impact unless complemented by longer-term interventions in STEM education, technical training and entrepreneurship incubation. In this sector, the role of the Trade and Gender Equality Working Group will be less about facilitating current trade flows and more about supporting programmes that develop the next generation of women entrepreneurs and professionals.

Pharmaceuticals

India's pharmaceutical exports to the UK are expected to benefit from CETA's provisions on regulatory cooperation, particularly the mutual recognition of Good Manufacturing Practices. These measures can reduce compliance costs and simplify market entry procedures, especially for smaller exporters.

However, the main constraint for women in this sector is access to trade finance rather than regulatory barriers. Many women participate in pharmaceutical production or quality control but remain underrepresented in export management and international business roles. The Agreement provides an institutional basis to address this gap through the gender chapter's cooperation provisions on enhancing the competitiveness of women-owned enterprises, combined with commitments in the financial services chapter to promote diversity in finance. Effective implementation will require programmes that connect women entrepreneurs to trade finance, export mentorship and international buyer networks.



Processed food, horticulture and beverages

Processed food, horticulture and beverages represent sectors with growing export potential under CETA. The Agreement provides duty-free access to the UK market for Indian agricultural and marine products, and the UK Government's impact assessment estimates a 30.8% increase in UK imports of other processed foods from India in the long term. The sanitary and phytosanitary measures chapter's commitments on food safety standards, and labelling, reduce the cost of adapting products for the UK market (UK Department of Business and Trade, 2025a). The technical barriers to trade chapter's requirement that technical regulations be based on international standards reduces the variation between UK and Indian product rules, meaning exporters are less likely to face separate compliance requirements for each market.

Women have a notable presence in food processing at the micro-enterprise level but the main constraint is export readiness rather than production capacity. Quality certification requirements, packaging standards and international testing norms impose disproportionate costs on smaller women-led enterprises, many of which operate informally and in rural areas. The gender chapter's provisions on capacity-building and competitiveness of women-owned enterprises provide the institutional basis for addressing these gaps, but effective implementation will require programmes that specifically target certification support, compliance training and direct market links for women producers (FICCI FLO and Nikore Associates, "Ports of Possibilities").

Services

Services trade already forms a significant component of the UK-India economic relationship, particularly in computer programming, telecommunications and financial services. CETA's provisions on digital trade, cross-border data flows and paperless trade systems can expand these exchanges by reducing procedural barriers to cross-border service delivery.

However, women remain underrepresented in many of these sectors. For example, computer programming, which contributes £1.7 billion to bilateral services trade, has female participation of only around 3.5%, while financial services record just 1.8% female participation (NSSO and MoSPI, "Annual Report, PLFS, 2023–24," 2024). Without targeted measures, expanded market access risks reinforcing existing gender disparities.

The agreement's Professional Services Working Group, which will explore opportunities for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, provides a potential mechanism to increase women's participation. Ensuring inclusive outcomes will require integrating gender considerations into the group's mandate, alongside investments in digital skills development and professional mobility programmes for women.

In a nutshell: Three main barriers limiting Indian women's participation in United Kingdom-India trade



Women's exclusion from trade in India does not result from a single constraint but from three reinforcing types of barriers.

- 1. Gendered social barriers** limit women's ability to participate in trade. Women in India perform nearly eight times more unpaid care work than men, creating severe time constraints that restrict their ability to invest in training, networking and export preparation (Karmannaya Counsel et al., 2024). Mobility and safety concerns further compound these constraints. Ports, inland container depots and logistics hubs are often located in remote industrial areas with limited public transport and inadequate facilities, including poor lighting, sanitation and rest areas. As a result, women freight forwarders and Customs brokers frequently avoid visiting ports and rely on male colleagues to handle on-site interactions. Social norms also play a role: many women entrepreneurs report needing family approval to travel for business, attend trade fairs or work non-standard hours, constraints rarely faced by male traders(DPIIT, Government of India et al., 2025; FICCI FLO & Nikore Associates, 2025).
- 2. Barriers within the trade environment** arise once women attempt to enter export markets. Women entrepreneurs must navigate complex registration procedures, export-import licensing requirements and Customs processes, often without professional support. These operational challenges are compounded by the absence of a dedicated policy framework to promote women's participation in international trade.

Access to finance remains a major constraint. While the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises expanded coverage for women-led enterprises in 2024, it primarily supports domestic credit and does not address export working capital or pre-shipment finance, where the financing gap is most acute (CGTMSE, Government of India, 2024). At the same time, limited training on digital trade systems reinforces the gender digital divide, making it harder for women entrepreneurs to navigate online registration and clearance processes(FICCI FLO & Nikore Associates, 2025).

Women also face barriers in accessing trade networks and market opportunities. Key channels for identifying export opportunities –such as export promotion councils, buyer networks and trade fairs – remain male-dominated and relationship-based, while registration fees, travel costs and limited outreach further restrict women's participation. Awareness of government schemes supporting exporters also remains low among women-led businesses.

- 3. CETA-specific knowledge gaps** are the third barrier. Even where women-led businesses overcome social and domestic constraints and are export-ready, they often lack information on UK buyer networks, consumer preferences, pricing structures, financing options and regulatory requirements, limiting their ability to capture opportunities created by the Agreement.

In sectors such as apparel and textiles, tariff elimination under CETA improves competitiveness but men typically control buyer relationships, pricing and logistics, allowing intermediaries to capture much of the gain. In other sectors—including electronics, pharmaceuticals and professional services—the Agreement introduces regulatory reforms and new market opportunities that require specialized knowledge to access. Yet women remain underrepresented in industry networks and export promotion councils, where such information is typically shared.

Awareness of the Agreement's trade facilitation measures is also limited. Provisions such as faster Customs release times, deferred duty payments and greater transparency in Customs regulations can significantly benefit smaller exporters but women entrepreneurs are often excluded from the informal networks through which these changes are communicated(DPIIT, Government of India et al., 2025). Although the SME chapter commits to information-sharing and contact points, women traders still lack dedicated help desks, targeted outreach and local-language guidance on how to access these opportunities.



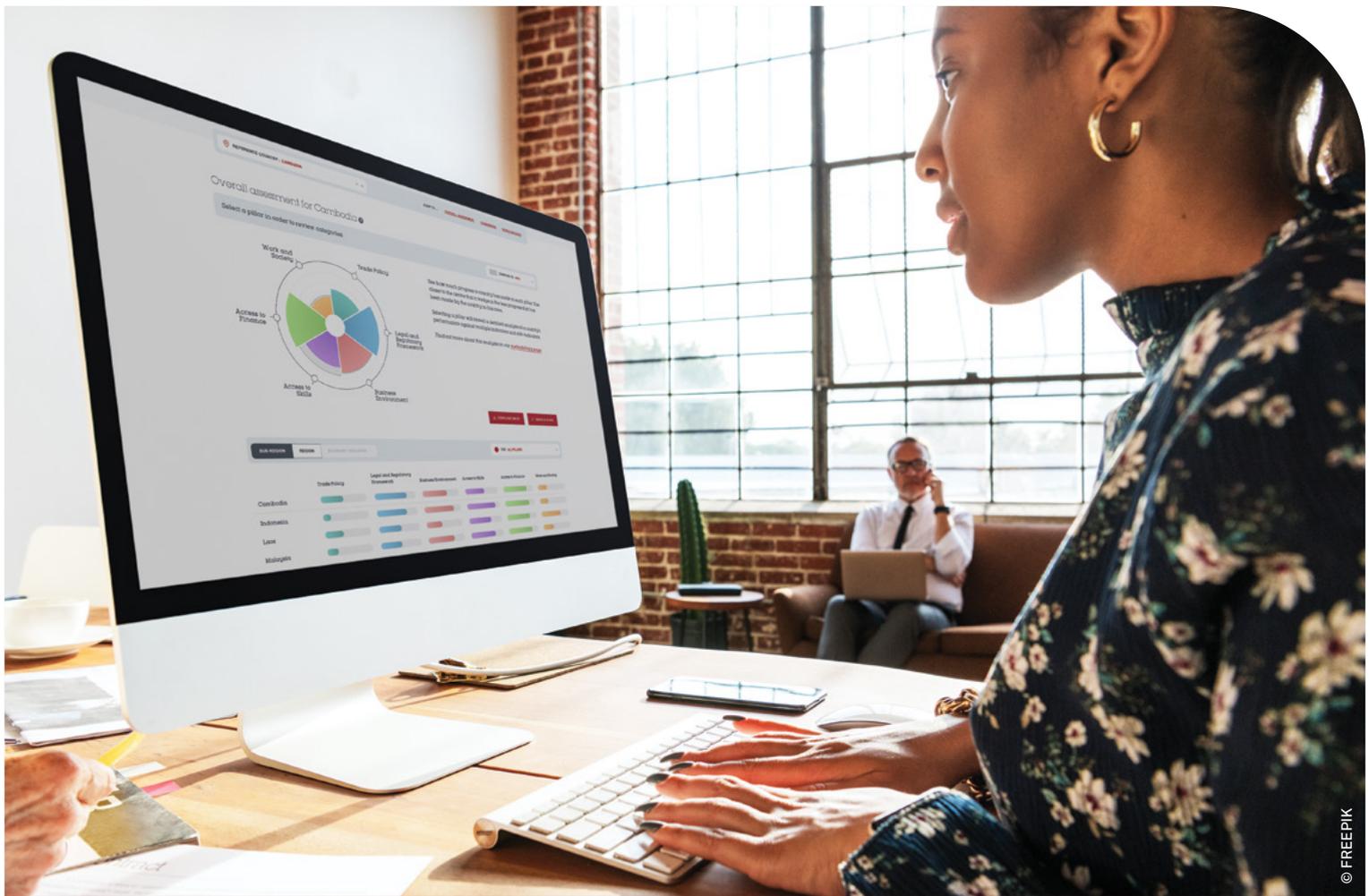
Policy recommendations

India has made significant progress in mainstreaming gender across its trade and logistics ecosystem. The Government of India's National Trade Facilitation Action Plan 2020–2023 positions gender inclusion as a core principle, with Action Point 27 mandating capacity-building programmes, mentoring networks and targeted support for women traders. Complementary frameworks, including the National Logistics Policy and the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, also identify gender inclusion as a cross-cutting priority.

Several institutions have translated these commitments into operational reforms. The Logistics Division of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has developed a blueprint for gender mainstreaming in logistics. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has issued guidelines to improve gender integration in Customs operations and working conditions at border crossings (Nikore Associates and GIZ, 2025). The Land Ports Authority of India has introduced gender-sensitive infrastructure improvements, including sanitation facilities, rest areas and enhanced safety protocols (Nisha Taneja & et al., 2023). Similarly, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has undertaken assessments to identify barriers facing women in port operations (Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, 2024).

Despite these initiatives—including women-run logistics facilities, mentorship networks and dedicated help desks—many women remain excluded from export markets due to structural barriers. The recommendations below aim to scale and institutionalize existing efforts through the governance architecture of the UK-India CETA, particularly through the Trade and Gender Equality Working Group.

SheTrades Outlook can serve as a practical implementation tool for gender mainstreaming in trade. The tool evaluates the enabling environment for women's trade participation across 55 indicators covering areas across the whole policy ecosystem. By identifying policy gaps and good practices, the tool can support the Government of India in strengthening gender-responsive trade policies and monitoring progress under CETA.



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BOX 2 SheTrades Outlook: The leading global tool for inclusive trade policymaking

Since its launch in 2019, SheTrades Outlook has been the primary tool for policymakers globally to assess, monitor and improve the policy ecosystem for women in business and trade.

This first-of-its-kind tool tracks 55 indicators across six interlinked pillars: Trade Policy, Business Environment, Legal and Regulatory Framework, Access to Skills, Access to Finance, and Work and Society. It identifies policies, laws, programmes and practices that contribute to or prevent women’s participation in the economy and in trade.

Adopted by 70 countries (2025), nearly half of the WTO membership, SheTrades Outlook has informed global trade discussions including at the WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender, G20 and G7. It has also facilitated the exchange and scaling of best practices among policymakers in both developing and developed countries worldwide.

At the national level, SheTrades Outlook has informed policy dialogues and consultations that bring together public- and private-sector stakeholders to identify priority action

areas, targeted solutions, and clear roles and responsibilities for developing, implementing and monitoring inclusive policies.

Based on these dialogues, the tool has supported inclusive policy reforms in 20 countries, including the integration of gender considerations into trade and SME policies, export strategies and public procurement frameworks, as well as implementation strategies for gender-responsive FTAs.

SheTrades Outlook is based on data collected from an average of 20 national institutions and organizations per country. The data are gathered through interviews using semi-structured questionnaires, and a consultative approach that engages both public- and private-sector stakeholders. These include ministries of trade, education, finance, technology, and women’s affairs; public procurement authorities; Customs authorities; central banks; national statistics offices; business associations; chambers of commerce; and other trade support institutions.

SheTrades Outlook is publicly available online: <https://outlook.shetrades.com/>

8.1 Mainstreaming gender in the United Kingdom-India CETA

8.1.1 Adopt a gender action plan for CETA implementation

The Trade and Gender Equality Working Group should adopt a gender action plan with clear targets, timelines and monitoring indicators. The plan could set measurable objectives for women's participation in CETA-enabled trade across areas such as market access, financial inclusion, STEM participation and SME competitiveness.

Gender-disaggregated data collection should form the foundation of the plan, enabling baseline assessments and monitoring progress in women's export participation. The SheTrades Outlook methodology could be used to track outcomes and measure progress.

BOX 3 Best practice: Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement Trade and Gender Workplan

The Canada-Chile FTA's Trade and Gender chapter provides a workplan whose key design features distinguish it from nominal cooperation commitments found in most gender chapters. Each activity specifies a lead party, a timeline, a delivery format and an expected deliverable – making accountability bilateral and operational rather than aspirational. Activities are thematic and sequenced: early cycles prioritized capacity building on Gender-Based Analysis Plus for trade agreements; the current 2024–2025 cycle focuses on gender-disaggregated trade data methodology, sectoral inclusion in mining and clean technology, and cross-committee mainstreaming of gender and trade issues.

Documented outputs include a virtual knowledge-sharing event on gender-disaggregated trade data held in November 2024, workshops on

Gender-Based Analysis Plus, four Inclusive Trade Roundtables strengthening public-private collaboration, and sustained engagement with civil society partners including Women Economic Forum Chile, Women in Mining Chile and United Nations Women. The 2026–2027 workplan has already been agreed, structured around four priority areas: inclusive participation and intersectionality; trade and gender in multilateral forums; gender-disaggregated data exchange; and cooperation activities generating tangible benefits for women-led businesses.

The lesson for the CETA Working Group is specific: a workplan functions as an accountability mechanism only when it specifies activities, responsibilities and timelines. The mandate is already there; the structure needs to follow from the first meeting.

SOURCES: Chile Undersecretary of International Economic Relations, 2024; Chile Undersecretary of International Economic Relations, 2025.

8.1.2 Establish sector-specific trade councils for women entrepreneurs

Women-led MSMEs often require sector-specific market access support rather than generalized trade promotion. The Working Group could facilitate the establishment of bilateral trade councils in priority sectors, in partnership with organizations such as the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, the Confederation of Indian Industry, and UK business associations.

These councils would:

- Provide guidance on sector-specific regulatory requirements and quality standards
- Connect women entrepreneurs with UK buyer networks
- Disseminate information on opportunities created by CETA.

The February 2026 SheTrades Commonwealth+ trade mission to the UK – which connected 13 Indian women-led businesses with buyers in London, Manchester and Yorkshire – demonstrates a model these councils could institutionalize and scale (International Trade Centre, 2026).

8.1.3 Build a community of practice for United Kingdom-India women traders

A community of practice for India–UK women traders could serve as a knowledge-sharing and networking platform anchored by SheTrades, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the British High Commission and the Federation of Indian Export Organisations. Key components could include:

- A digital portal providing guidance on CETA provisions, UK market requirements and available support schemes
- An artificial intelligence-powered chatbot to help women traders navigate regulatory requirements in local languages
- City-level chapters to provide mentorship, peer learning and support for first-time exporters.

This platform would help bridge the information gap that currently limits women’s participation in export markets.

8.1.4 Launch a ‘women in trade’ champions programme

A UK-India ‘women in trade’ champions programme could provide targeted support for women entrepreneurs entering export markets. Selected participants could receive:

- Exposure visits to UK markets
- Certification and regulatory training
- Access to trade finance
- Links to buyer networks through sector councils.

By selecting champions from diverse regions and sectors, the programme could build local export knowledge networks across India.

8.2 Strengthening the enabling environment for women traders in India

8.2.1 Simplify regulatory and registration processes

Complex export registration procedures remain a major barrier for women-led micro enterprises. Building on the Export Promotion Mission launched in the 2025/26 Union Budget, the government could develop a digital step-by-step export toolkit for women entrepreneurs, integrated into the proposed artificial intelligence chatbot platform (Sitharaman, 2026).

8.2.2 Expand testing infrastructure at MSME clusters

Certification requirements are a major barrier in sectors such as textiles, food products and leather. Expanding testing laboratories that are accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories in MSME clusters with high concentrations of women-led enterprises would reduce dependence on intermediaries and enable women producers to participate directly in export markets.

8.2.3 Invest in gender-responsive port-side infrastructure

Safety and accessibility remain key barriers for women working in ports and logistics facilities. Annual gender and safety audits at ports, container freight stations and inland container depots could help identify infrastructure gaps and guide investments in lighting, sanitation facilities and secure transport links (FICCI FLO & Nikore Associates, 2025). Existing initiatives by the Land Ports Authority of India and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs provide replicable models that could be extended across the export supply chain (Press Information Bureau).

8.2.4 Improve awareness of existing support schemes

India has several schemes offering enhanced benefits to women-led MSMEs but awareness remains the critical gap. On export capacity, the Export Promotion Mission's Niryat Protsahan and Niryat Disha subschemes, Capacity Building of First Time Micro and Small Enterprises Exporters, the Scheme for Capacity Building in Textile Sector (20% seats reserved for women), and Zero Effect, Zero Defect Certification (100% cost subsidy for women-owned MSMEs) collectively address financing, skilling and market access (PIB Delhi, 2026; Ministry of MSMEs, 2023; Government of India, n.d.). On working capital, Stand-Up India has sanctioned over INR 610,000 million for women entrepreneurs (Ministry of Finance, Government of India, 2025). The Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises raised guarantee coverage for women-led enterprises to 90% in December 2024 (CGTMSE, Government of India, 2024). A consolidated scheme guide, disseminated through the sector-specific trade councils and community of practice recommended above, could convert policy availability into practical access.



8.2.5 Develop a trade finance facility for women-led MSMEs

The Trade and Gender Equality Working Group could develop a dedicated trade finance facility for women-led MSMEs. The facility could offer collateral-free working capital loans, export credit guarantees and pre-shipment finance calibrated to micro-enterprise cash-flow cycles. Potential entities to design the facility could include the Small Industries Development Bank of India, EXIM Bank and UK Export Finance.

The Working Group could consider a financing model that has already proven financially sustainable in the UK. UK Export Finance partnered with Female Founder Finance in December 2024 to channel women-led small businesses into its Bond Support Scheme, which provides an 80% bank guarantee for contract bonds alongside export insurance and capital guarantee products (UK Government, 2024).

This intermediary-led referral model is reinforced by the government-backed Invest in Women Task Force, which has mobilized a £255 million fund for women-led businesses, with the British Business Bank committing £130 million to the effort (BGF, 2025). The architecture of a specialist finance intermediary routing women entrepreneurs into existing export finance instruments, supported by a dedicated government guarantee pool, is suitable to the India context, given the existing wide government support for women-led MSMEs.

BOX 4 Best practice: International Finance Corporation Banking on Women – Global Trade Finance Programme

Launched in 2019, the International Finance Corporation initiative Banking on Women – Global Trade Finance Programme has allocated more than \$260 million in trade finance to over 233 women entrepreneurs globally. Its core design addresses the structural barriers excluding women from trade finance – collateral requirements, documentation complexity and information asymmetry – not through direct lending but through a blended finance architecture: the International Finance Corporation guarantees de-risked women-led portfolios for partner banks, while concessional donor funds and first-loss facilities are layered with private capital. Partner banks receive capacity support to develop gender-disaggregated value propositions. Viet Nam demonstrates the model's scale: partner banks reported between 6% and 30% of their profitable

trade portfolios are dedicated to women-led businesses, an area that grew 50–100% over five years.

The lesson for the CETA Working Group is that the trade finance gap for women-led MSMEs is a product of institutional design, not underlying credit risk: International Finance Corporation evidence shows women-owned businesses carry lower non-performing loan rates than male-owned comparators. A guarantee mechanism channelled through a specialist intermediary routing women entrepreneurs into existing export finance instruments – whether through the Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India, Small Industries Development Bank of India, or a dedicated CETA cooperation vehicle – can replicate this logic in the UK-India trade corridor.

SOURCES: International Finance Corporation, 2024.

BOX 5 Best practice: Busia border childcare centre, Kenya

Established in 2021 at the Kenya-Uganda crossing in Busia County, the centre was created in direct response to documented need: a 2022 baseline study found that 47% of women cross-border traders needed childcare but could not access it, and 94% reported that care responsibilities had measurably reduced their business performance. The constraint was not market access – women were already operating at the border – but the hours and geographic range they could commit to trade.

The centre was co-designed with the association of women cross-border traders and is located adjacent to the Soko Posta Market. It charges KES 50 per day, operates 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. aligned with trading hours, and includes a lactation room. A first monitoring survey conducted one year after enrolment tracked 43 beneficiaries and documented the following shifts:

- The share of women working more than eight hours daily rose from 59% to 85%
- The share sourcing goods from Uganda at least once a week rose from 65% to 89%
- 43% had diversified into markets beyond Busia town
- Average monthly sales rose 46%
- Average monthly profit nearly doubled.

The Busia model demonstrates, with longitudinal outcome data, the mechanism by which affordable care infrastructure translates into measurable trade gains. The UK-India CETA's workplace flexibility provision identifies work-life balance as a cooperation area but leaves operationalization undefined. A cooperation activity committing both parties to piloting comparable care infrastructure at identified trade corridors or export cluster sites would convert a passive provision into a concrete commitment with a tested precedent.

SOURCES: African Women Studies Centre, 2024.

8.3 Addressing structural barriers to women's trade participation

8.3.1 Recognize care infrastructure as trade-enabling infrastructure

Time poverty resulting from unpaid care responsibilities remains a major barrier to women's participation in trade. CETA's recognition of **unpaid care work as a structural constraint** creates an opportunity for cooperation in expanding childcare services near **export clusters and logistics hubs**.

8.3.2 Address safety and mobility at trade infrastructure

Safety concerns and social norms often limit women's ability to access ports, Customs facilities and industry events. Gender-responsive infrastructure investments, combined with mobility and safety indicators in the gender action plan, can help address these constraints.



8.4 Deploying SheTrades Outlook for CETA implementation

This tool provides a ready framework to support CETA's commitments on gender-disaggregated trade data and policy monitoring. Unlike traditional export statistics, SheTrades Outlook collects information through institutional surveys of government agencies, trade support organizations and business associations, capturing women's participation in sectors where informal and micro-scale producers are often invisible in official data.

Beyond measurement, the Outlook also functions as a policy reform mechanism. ITC-led validation workshops in participating countries have already generated cross-ministry dialogue and policy change in 20 countries, including reforms in trade, SME and public procurement policies.

For the CETA Trade and Gender Equality Working Group, commissioning a SheTrades Outlook assessment would establish a baseline for women's participation in trade, support sector-specific action plans, and enable transparent monitoring of progress under the Agreement.

9

Conclusion

The UK-India CETA represents a significant milestone in the evolution of gender-responsive trade policy. By incorporating India's first stand-alone Trade and Gender Equality chapter, the Agreement establishes an institutional and policy framework that explicitly recognizes structural barriers to women's economic participation and creates mechanisms to address them through cooperation, data collection and policy coordination.

At the same time, this paper highlights a central challenge: expanded market access alone does not guarantee inclusive outcomes. CETA creates substantial export opportunities, particularly in sectors such as apparel and textiles, gems and jewellery, electronics and machinery, pharmaceuticals and chemicals, and horticulture, processed food, and beverages. However, women's ability to benefit from these opportunities is constrained by structural, institutional and information barriers. Women remain concentrated in lower-value segments of export value chains; face persistent gaps in access to finance and market networks; and encounter mobility, safety and care constraints that limit their engagement with trade infrastructure and international markets.

Bridging the gap between trade expansion and inclusive participation therefore requires deliberate policy action. The recommendations outlined in this paper emphasize four priorities.

- 1.** The Trade and Gender Equality chapter needs to be operationalized through a gender action plan with measurable targets, timelines and monitoring mechanisms.
- 2.** Implementing targeted initiatives can strengthen women's access to buyer networks, certification systems and export knowledge.
- 3.** Improving the domestic enabling environment through simplified regulatory processes, expanded testing infrastructure, gender-responsive logistics facilities and improved access to trade finance is essential to enable women-led MSMEs to enter export markets.
- 4.** Deploying SheTrades Outlook in India can provide the evidence base needed to benchmark performance, guide policy reforms and track progress under the agreement.

Annex 1: Comparison of FTAs using the ITC Gender-Responsive Framework for FTAs

FTA	ITC FRAMEWORK DIMENSION
1. GENDER-EXPLICIT PREAMBLE / GENERAL COMMITMENTS	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Stand-alone gender chapter; rights-based framing; references the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
UK-JAPAN COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (CEPA) (2020)	Women's economic empowerment chapter; general commitments; best-endeavour language
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Stand-alone Trade and Gender Equality chapter; references Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and CEDAW
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Stand-alone Trade and Gender Equality chapter; references SDG 5 and CEDAW
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Stand-alone Trade and Gender Equality chapter; references SDG 5 and CEDAW; names unpaid care work as a structural barrier
2. RECOGNITION OF BARRIERS TO WOMEN IN TRADE	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Explicitly names specific barriers including access to finance, markets and information for women entrepreneurs
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	General acknowledgement of barriers; limited specificity in barrier identification
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Identifies barriers to markets, finance, business networks and digital skills; cooperation-based framing
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Identifies barriers to markets, finance, business networks and digital skills; cooperation-based framing
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Explicitly names unpaid care work, discrimination, financial exclusion, skills gaps, and MSME barriers; recognizes diverse and marginalized women
3. SCOPE OF COOPERATION ACTIVITIES	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Broad: access to markets, finance, skills, entrepreneurship support, information-sharing
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	Moderate: skills, entrepreneurship, networking; Working Group has delivered joint programmes in practice
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Broad: equal opportunities, markets, technology, finance, trade missions, digital skills, data and monitoring
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Broad: financial inclusion, skills, entrepreneurship, digital access, trade missions, gender-disaggregated data framework
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Broadest scope: markets, MSME competitiveness, global value-chain participation, finance, trade missions, STEM, digital trade, care economy, multilateral cooperation, joint research
4. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Joint Committee oversees implementation; no dedicated gender committee specified in text (information on dedicated gender body not available in publicly accessible text)
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	Dedicated Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group; has met and delivered concrete joint activities
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Dedicated Dialogue on Trade and Gender Equality; can engage other bodies across the agreement
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Gender equality embedded within the broader Inclusive Trade Committee (alongside indigenous trade and SMEs); not a stand-alone gender mechanism
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Dedicated Trade and Gender Equality Working Group; broadest mandate: can engage all subsidiary bodies; can engage external stakeholders including marginalized groups



FTA	ITC FRAMEWORK DIMENSION
5. RESEARCH, IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Refers to cooperation on research and information-sharing; no explicit data mandate in text (detailed provisions unavailable from publicly accessible sources)
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	Cooperation on research encouraged but not mandated; data provisions not specified in publicly available text (unavailable)
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Explicitly includes cooperation to integrate gender in data collection, analysis and monitoring; evidence-based approach mandated
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Explicit framework for sex / gender-disaggregated data and gender-focused analysis of trade policies; evidence-based approach mandated
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Explicit mandate on gender-disaggregated data; joint research on trade and gender equality; evidence-based cooperation activities specified
6. GENDER PROVISIONS IN OTHER CHAPTERS (MAINSTREAMING)	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Limited mainstreaming; gender provisions largely confined to stand-alone chapter
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	Mainstreaming across labour, services, digital trade; cross-chapter references noted in official documentation
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Gender provisions mainstreamed across SMEs, financial services, labour, digital trade, procurement and services chapters
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Gender provisions mainstreamed across SMEs, financial services, labour, digital trade, procurement, development and services chapters
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Most extensive mainstreaming: eight additional chapters; Working Group formally mandated to engage all of these
7. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT / ENFORCEABILITY OF GENDER PROVISIONS	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Gender chapter excluded from dispute settlement; provisions are cooperative in nature
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	Gender chapter excluded from dispute settlement; cooperative character
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Gender chapter excluded from dispute settlement; cooperative character
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Gender chapter excluded from dispute settlement; cooperative character
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Gender chapter excluded from dispute settlement; cooperative character (consistent with all current bilateral FTA gender chapters)
8. QUANTITATIVE TARGETS / FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR WOMEN TRADERS	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	No quantitative targets or financial incentives specified
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	No quantitative targets or financial incentives specified
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	No quantitative targets or financial incentives specified
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	No quantitative targets or financial incentives specified
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	No quantitative targets or financial incentives specified
OVERALL ITC MATURITY LEVEL	
CHILE-URUGUAY FTA (2016)	Evolving-advanced
UK-JAPAN CEPA (2020)	Evolving
UK-AUSTRALIA FTA (2021)	Advanced
UK-NEW ZEALAND FTA (2022)	Evolving-advanced
UK-INDIA CETA (2025)	Advanced

Annex 2: Export potential, baseline exports and unrealized potential for goods trade between India and the United Kingdom

SECTOR	EXPORT POTENTIAL (\$ BILLIONS)	BASELINE EXPORTS (\$ BILLIONS)	UNREALIZED POTENTIAL (\$ BILLIONS)
MACHINERY AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT	3.5	2.5	1.3
MINERALS, METALS AND PRODUCTS THEREOF	2.9	2.0	1.5
APPAREL AND TEXTILE PRODUCTS	2.6	1.7	0.9
CHEMICALS	2.2	1.4	0.9
VEHICLES	1.8	0.8	1.0
WOOD, PAPER, RUBBER, PLASTICS	1.0	0.7	0.4
MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS NOT ELSEWHERE SPECIFIED	2.2	1.4	0.9
HORTICULTURE	0.6	0.3	0.4
SEA ANIMAL PRODUCTS	0.4	0.1	0.3
SKINS, LEATHER PRODUCTS AND THEREOF AND FOOTWEAR	0.4	0.4	0.1
CEREAL AND CEREAL PRODUCTS	0.3	0.2	0.2
PROCESSED FOOD AND ANIMAL FEED	0.3	0.2	0.1
VEGETABLE PRODUCTS NOT ELSEWHERE SPECIFIED	0.2	0.1	0.2
BEVERAGES	0.2	0.1	0.1
TEXTILES (FABRIC)	0.2	0.2	0.1
MINERAL RESOURCES	0.2	0.1	0.1
ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS	0.1	0.0	0.1
OTHER SECTORS NOT ELSEWHERE SPECIFIED	0.1	0.0	0.0

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The International Trade Centre's (ITC) SheTrades Initiative is a global platform that empowers women to engage in business, creating value for both them and their communities. The Initiative ensures that the right capacities and conditions are present to foster inclusive and sustainable trade.

SheTrades delivers activities and training that improve women traders' ability to do business successfully. At the same time, the Initiative works to remove inequalities that hinder women's participation in trade and foster a better trade environment for all.

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