What gets measured gets done: SheTrades Outlook

International Trade Centre
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Contents

Introduction

Despite the importance of gender equality in fostering economic prosperity and sustainable development, women face gender-specific, complex, and interconnected barriers. Women's unequal access to skills, finance, resources, and markets limits their direct involvement in economic activities and international trade.

International organizations such as the International Trade Centre (ITC) have been working to level the playing field for women in the different roles they play as workers, entrepreneurs, producers, and consumers (see Box 1). The 2017 Buenos Aires WTO Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment, supported by 127 Member States, put gender equality at the heart of the multilateral trading system. Through this, countries have expressed a will to find solutions to help women reap the full benefits of trade by, for example, exchanging good practices and improving the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data.

Box 1. Women's participation in international trade

- Women as workers of businesses engaged in international trade that participate in regional and global value chains as exporters or importers.

- Women as entrepreneurs or managers of businesses that are engaged in international trade.

- Women as producers of goods and services that are traded internationally, use imported inputs, or are sold on markets that compete with similar imported products.

SheTrades Outlook, the first of its kind, responds to the pressing need for up-to-date, accurate, coherent information to shape gender-responsive policies. This innovative tool assists stakeholders across the world to assess, monitor, and improve how the ecosystem supports women's participation in international trade. The tool provides quantifiable and comparable indicators across countries related to trade and gender and helps stakeholders to:
- Map the ecosystem, identify gaps, and prioritize areas where adjusting interventions are crucial to achieve better results;
- Monitor progress and evaluate the outcomes of gender-mainstreaming interventions;
- Identify gaps between commitments and achievements;
- Share knowledge, compare experiences, and identify good practices;
- Enable comparisons across countries.

When designing SheTrades Outlook, various gender indices were analysed. Existing indices explore the different dimensions affecting the participation of women in the economy but do not holistically address the full economic environment or focus on targeted aspects related to trade. (Annex I reviews the existing indices).

This paper discusses the rationale and methodology underpinning SheTrades Outlook.

The concept of women's economic empowerment

There is no single definition of women's economic empowerment. Researchers have referred to the concept in terms of process or outcome (Bayeh, 2016; Cornwall, 2016; Lord & Hutchison, 1993), capacity (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2012b; UN Women, 2017), and agency (Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Klugman et al., 2014; Sen, 1997). SheTrades Outlook adopts the definition of Kabeer (1999), where empowerment is defined as "the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such an ability". According to this definition, empowerment lies in three distinct, interlinked domains – resources, agency, and achievements (see Annex II).

The SheTrades Outlook framework touches on many different aspects of change in women's access to and participation in trade at the different levels of empowerment, each important in themselves and in their interrelationships with others (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Women's empowerment framework
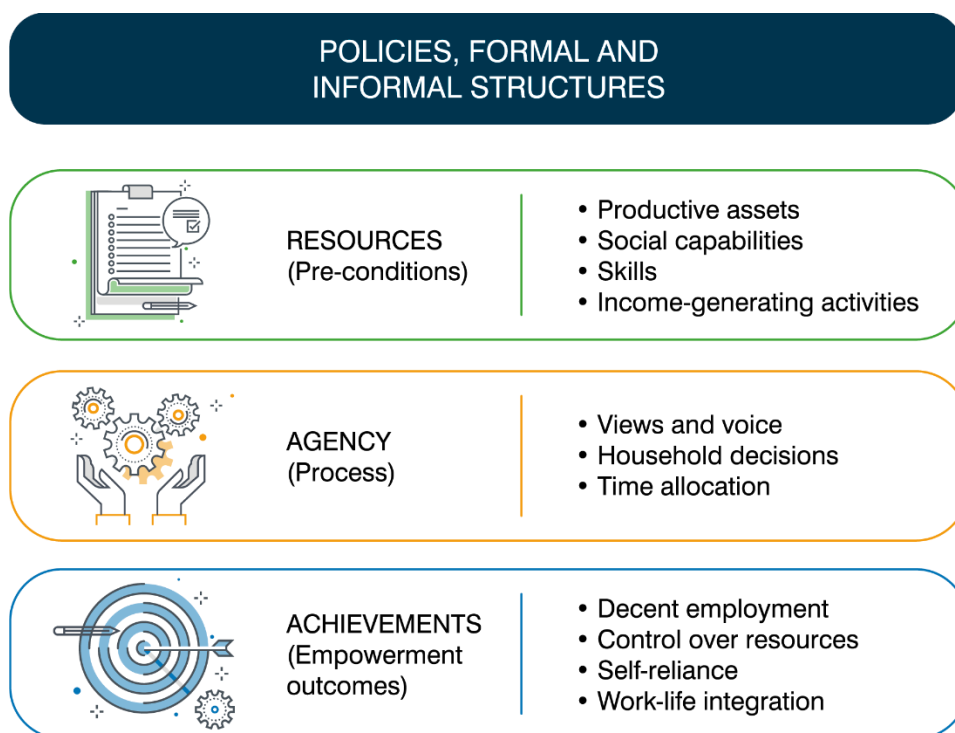
Based on:

Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change, 30*(3), 435–464.

IFPRI. (2012). *Women's empowerment in agriculture index*. International Food Policy Research Institute.

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Existing indicators to measure the state of gender equality

Several organizations have collected data on gender inequalities across different areas of human development, including poverty, health, education, labour, formal laws, and economic and political participation (see Annex I). Despite these efforts, the limited availability of gender-disaggregated data is one of the main challenges in many countries when designing gender-responsive policies, gender impact assessments, and monitoring tools. Available data have been gathered primarily at the country or regional level, at different points in time, and are not easily comparable. In addition, the linkages and channels of interaction between trade and gender are not clear, and robust evidence is available for only some countries and regions.

The design of better measurement tools is critical for examining when, where, and how changes happen. In this regard, composite indicators have proven useful to address complex, multidimensional, multidirectional, and multilevel phenomena (Greco et al., 2019), such as the linkages between trade and gender. Indeed, more than 100 indicators have been designed to measure human well-being and progress (Yang, 2014). Well-known composite indices include the Gender Empowerment Index, the Gender Inequality Index, the Global Peace Index, the Happiness Index, the Human Development Index, and the Human Poverty Index. In particular, the number of composite indices measuring aspects of gender inequality have increased significantly.

SheTrades Outlook six pillars

SheTrades Outlook is based on six pillars: trade policy; legal and regulatory frameworks; business environment; access to finance; access to skills; and work and society. These pillars have been chosen and are justified based on key concepts of women's economic empowerment.

The pillars can be further divided into subgroups that are independent of each other. Each pillar contains one or more indicative variables, each of which includes several indicators and subindicators when needed. This nested structure ensures the transparency of the overall index, which is essential in the construction of credible indicators. It also improves users' understanding of the driving forces behind the composite indicators, and gives a clear sense of what is being measured by the composite index.

Pillar 1: trade policy

This pillar focuses on the inclusiveness of trade agreements, regulations, and practices (Table 1). It also includes the adoption of gender-sensitive practices in trade and trade-related institutions.

Table 1. Indicators in the SheTrades Outlook trade policy pillar

Variable	Indicator
Consultation process	Official mechanisms are in place to involve women's associations and organizations in consultation processes
	Women's associations and organizations participate in consultation processes
	Initiatives are in place to encourage women's business associations to participate in consultation processes
Gender-related concerns included in policies and agreements	Trade-related concerns are included in the policy or plan of action on gender equality and women's empowerment
	Gender provisions are included in trade agreements or regional economic integration agreements
Assessment, monitoring, and evaluation	Gender ex ante and ex post assessments are carried out for trade agreements
	Gender indicators are used in policies, programmes, and projects
Sex-disaggregated data	Laws or regulations exist that mandate the collection of gender-disaggregated data
	Gender-disaggregated data on companies are collected
Women's participation in strategic roles	Women are represented in ministerial positions
	Women are represented in national parliaments
	There is a gender quota to promote women's political participation at national and subnational levels
Capacity-building on gender issues	Trade ministry staff have been trained in gender issues in the past 12 months
	There is a gender focal point or similar representative focusing on trade and gender issues

Pillar 2: business environment

This pillar focuses on the inclusiveness of the business ecosystem in terms of industry bodies supporting women entrepreneurship, the ease and costs of establishing and running a business, trading across borders, and access to information and public procurement markets (Table 2).

Table 2. Indicators in the SheTrades Outlook business environment pillar

Variable	Indicator
Presence and participation of women's business associations	Women's business associations are represented at the national level
	Women's business associations are represented in all key sectors and subsectors
	Women-owned businesses have participated in activities carried out by chambers of commerce in the past 12 months
Business start-ups	Support services are available when establishing a company
	An incubator or accelerator programme exists in the country
Access to trade-relevant information	Help and information desks are available at government offices to assist companies complying with national regulations and export/import requirements
	Key updated information on customs procedures and trade regulations is visible at borders and published or notified online in a timely manner
Public procurement	Access to information on public procurement is available
	The public procurement process is transparent
	There is a preferential scheme for public procurement for women-owned enterprises
Grievance mechanisms to report unfair practices	Means exist for women and men to report complaints of wrongdoing on regulations and procedures
	Official mechanisms are in place to monitor working conditions and data are collected on workers in export-processing zones
Existence of special frameworks and initiatives	A single-window electronic interface exists, and digital trade facilitation mechanisms are in place
	National institutions use gender-sensitive guidelines developed by the World Customs Organization or other national monitoring framework
	Training and sensitization have been provided to border-level agents and officials in the past 12 months
Public-private dialogue and frameworks	The regulatory framework for public-private partnerships includes gender concerns
	Structured dialogues have taken place with the private sector regarding gender equity policies, programmes, and activities in the past 12 months

Pillar 3: legal and regulatory framework

This pillar assesses how laws and regulations protect and promote women's rights (Table 3). It also covers laws and policies that encourage women's entry, continuity, and advancement in labour markets by supporting women to, for example, combine work with care responsibilities.

Table 3. Indicators in the SheTrades Outlook legal and regulatory framework pillar

Variable	Indicator
Signature, ratification, and implementation of international conventions	Country has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the CEDAW optional protocol
	Laws, policies, and procedures are reviewed to ensure compliance with CEDAW articles and the Committee concluding remarks
	International Labour Organization conventions 100, 111, and 183 are ratified and enforced in the country
Restrictions to access productive resources	Women and men have equal inheritance rights
	Women and men have equal ownership rights to immovable property
	Women and men have equal access to financial services
Restrictions related to labour market	The law mandates non-discrimination based on gender in employment
	The legal framework offers women legal protection from sexual harassment in the workplace
	The law mandates equal remuneration for females and males for work of equal value
Paid parental leave	Maternity leave policies exist
	Parental leave is available for both parents
Child-care facilities	Families with children under school age receive support for early childhood education and care
	Parents receive child-care support
	Initiatives are in place to encourage investment in child-care preschool facilities

Pillar 4: access to finance

This pillar focuses on women's access to formal financial institutions (Table 4). The pillar also covers whether countries – alone or in partnership with the private sector – have developed innovative solutions to promote financial inclusion for women, for example by addressing the lack of physical collateral or verifiable cashflow requirements. The pillar includes gender-budgeting consideration, data collection, and fiscal schemes.

Table 4. Indicators in the SheTrades Outlook access to finance pillar

Variable	Indicator
Access to financial services	Coverage of financial service providers
	Digital financial services are available
	There is access to formal financial resources (female/male ratio)
Gender-responsive strategies and programmes	The government is committed to using gender budgeting
	Financial inclusion strategies and programmes exist
	Financial training has been provided in the past 12 months
Support for women-owned businesses and business associations	Women-owned businesses receive financial support to participate in trade fairs
	Women's associations and organizations receive financial support from institutions
Fiscal and targeted trade finance schemes	Financial institutions are mandated to report gender-disaggregated data
	Fiscal schemes are available to facilitate entrepreneurial opportunities
	Trade finance schemes are available in the country to facilitate trade
Financial instruments and other financing opportunities	Financial instruments are available to support entrepreneurial opportunities
	Venture capital financing opportunities are available to support women entrepreneurs

Pillar 5: access to skills

This pillar focuses on measures designed to enhance women's capabilities and business-related skills, with the aims of closing the education gap and equipping women with the necessary skills to compete and succeed in international markets and in occupations traditionally dominated by men (Table 5).

Table 5. Indicators in the SheTrades Outlook access to skills pillar

Variable	Indicator
Universal access to education	Law mandates compulsory education
	Adult literacy rate (age 15 years and over) (female/male ratio)
Monitoring frameworks	National numeracy tests are gender-disaggregated
	Data on drop-out ratios are available by gender
Access to tertiary education	Scholarships are available to continue tertiary education
	Enrolment rate in technical and vocational programmes for people aged 15–24 years (female/male ratio)
Targeted programmes to enhance skills for workers	National industry placement programmes are available for undergraduates
	Programmes to enhance production skills for workers have been available in the past 12 months
Targeted programmes to enhance skills for companies	Training opportunities to support micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprise owners' skills and knowledge have been offered in the past 12 months
	Special training to facilitate access to markets has been available in the past 12 months
Targeted support to enhance skills and access to information	Support was provided to women's associations and organizations in the past 12 months
	Programmes exclusively targeting women with incentives were provided in the past 12 months
Access to information and communication technologies	Policies and programmes are in place to support business innovation exclusively targeting women
	National statistics on access to information and communication technologies are available
	Access to information and communication technologies (female/male ratio)

Pillar 6: work and society

This pillar refers to unconscious or conscious gender biases that prevent women from participating fully in the economy in equal conditions, regardless of their education or socioeconomic status (Table 6). This includes existing patterns of job segregation and the interventions set up by governments to address these biases.

Table 6. Indicators in the SheTrades Outlook work and society pillar

Variable	Indicator
Woman's opportunities in the labour market	Women are allowed to work in the same industries and perform the same tasks as men
	Estimated annual earned income, purchasing power parity (female/male ratio)
Division of labour	Labour force participation rate (female/male ratio)
	Female share of employment in managerial positions (%)
Gender occupational biases	Unemployment rate with advanced education ratio (female/male ratio)
	Time spent on unpaid domestic chores and care work (male/female ratio)
National and regional awareness initiatives	National public campaign has been launched including gender considerations in its message or designed exclusively to promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the past 12 months
	National institutions have participated in regional or international initiatives, working groups, or dialogues aimed at promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the past 12 months
Support of private and non-profit initiatives	Awards and recognition programmes have been used to highlight companies' best practices or initiatives to promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the past 12 months
	National institutions have supported awareness initiatives launched by the private sector, non-governmental organizations, or international organizations to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the past 12 months

Linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals

The achievement of gender equality and women empowerment is embedded in all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all Member States of the United Nations in 2015. In light of this, and in line with the ambitious global agenda, the SheTrades Outlook framework tackles the gender aspects of 6 of the 17 Goals: SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). Figure 2 presents the linkages between the SheTrades Outlook pillars and the SDGs.

Figure 2. Linkages between SheTrades Outlook and the Sustainable Development Goals
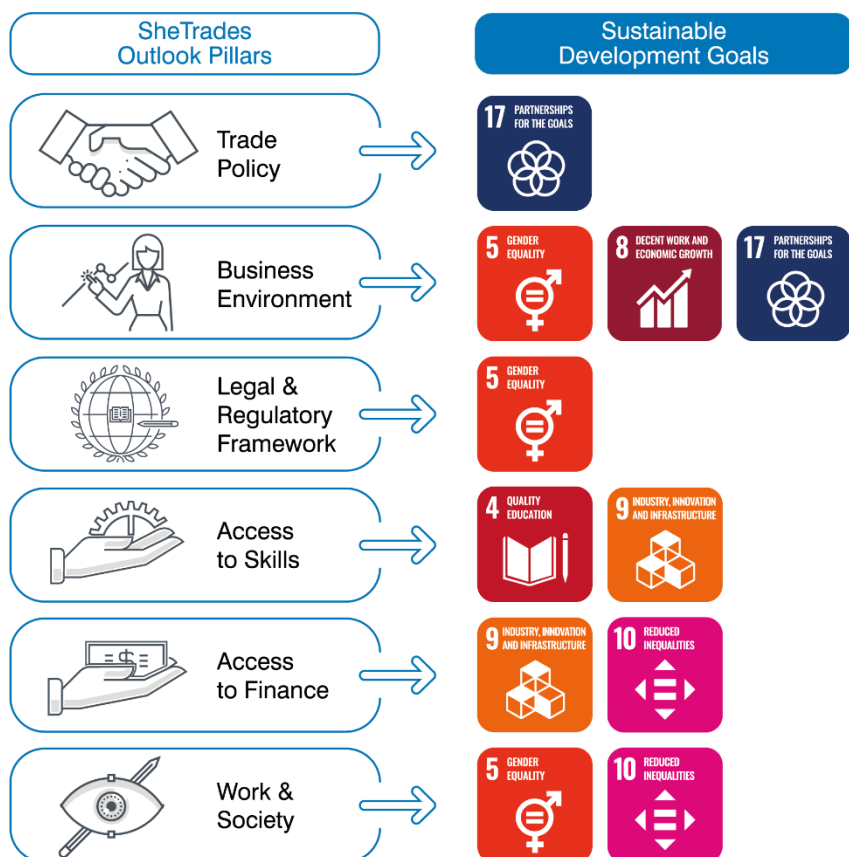
Methodology

The composite index is based on 83 indicators designed to capture the critical dimensions of gender inequality in countries of different levels of development across the world. SheTrades Outlook provides a holistic view of the various aspects of the multidimensional, multilevel, and complex linkages between trade and gender.

Data collection and coverage

The first stage of the SheTrades Outlook project covers 25 countries. The data-collection process was divided into 2 phases: a pilot and testing phase, which comprised 4 countries, and a rollout phase, which included 21 countries (Table 7).

Table 7. Countries included in the first stage of the SheTrades Outlook project

Phase 1	Pilot	Bangladesh, Ghana, Jamaica, Malaysia
Phase 2	Rollout	Australia, Botswana, Canada, Eswatini, Fiji, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Zambia

Countries in the pilot phase were selected based on their level of development, geographical location, and political commitment to trade and gender equality. Country selection in the rollout phase followed similar criteria. Data collection for the pilot phase (January–June 2019) covered more than 70 national institutions and organizations. Before and during the pilot phase, intensive stakeholder consultations were held to ensure the relevance of indicators, to test the mapping of relevant institutions, to identify potential risks, to improve the data-collection strategy, and to validate the methodology.

The rollout phase included stakeholder workshops in selected countries. At the time of writing, more than 460 institutions and organizations have been interviewed, and more than 60 practices have been identified.

Data collection relies primarily on primary sources. It also makes use of reliable, publicly available, recently updated data sources published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, and the World Trade Organization.

Primary data collection is administered through semi-structured questionnaires. National consultants have been identified and trained by the ITC headquarters team in each country. In these countries, the survey was administered by a focal point identified by the government or by an ITC expert in the field. On average, 20 national institutions and organizations have been identified per country. This number depends on the country size and the government structure. Examples of institutions surveyed include ministries of trade, ministries of education, ministries of finance, public procurement authorities, customs authorities, central banks, national statistics offices, ministries of technology, ministries of women's affairs, business associations, chambers of commerce, and other trade support institutions.

Data quality assessment

SheTrades Outlook builds on existing theoretical frameworks to ensure the quality of data used in the construction of the index. In the development of composite indices, limited data are a driver of indicator selection rather than a theoretical concept. This represents a common dilemma faced in the construction of a composite index. This means that accuracy could become secondary if the data are not available or are too expensive to be collected. While there is no "magic number" describing how many indicators are necessary to explain a situation, the appropriate amount of data and missing data are taken into account in the design of the index framework.

Following existing data quality criteria established by the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2019), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2012a), and the United Nations (2017), SheTrades Outlook uses the following six data quality criteria:

- Relevance – the indicators selected are aligned with theoretical concepts.
- Accuracy – the degree to which the data reflect the situation of women in trade.
- Timeliness – if data covering the different pillars are released at different time periods, attention is given to minimizing erroneous estimations.
- Interpretability – the extent to which users can easily understand and correctly use the data, including providing access to metadata.
- Coherence – data are presented in a consistent way that allows full comparability over time and countries.
- Accessibility – full access is ensured to any interested stakeholder via a free, open online tool.

Coding and scoring

Individual indicators include gender-specific and trade-related indicators, but with a disproportionate effect on women in trade. The indicators provide a very large amount of information; in the raw state, however, they are impossible to interpret in a meaningful and understandable way. The indicators in the dataset do not all have the same measurement units, which is a major obstacle for data aggregation. SheTrades Outlook data include binary questions, categorical questions, and quantitative variables, and so some data transformation at this stage is required to use the indicators efficiently and to ensure the comparability of variables across countries.

To adjust differences in measurement units across the indicators before aggregation, qualitative and quantitative data are coded and all indicators given a score between 0 and 1. The desired outcome is the achievement of gender equality. In the SheTrades Outlook calculation, gender equality aligns with the concept of parity, expressed as women and men benefiting equally from a programme, project, or initiative. A margin of 10% is considered an acceptable achievement standard. The benchmark for scoring is what is considered the best scenario that could be interpreted in terms of distance from the gender equality point set at 1. Table 8 presents the different data transformation techniques applied.

Missing data

Most of the information used in the construction of the SheTrades Outlook index relies on ITC data collection conducted through semi-structured interviews. For this purpose, ITC counted on the support of experienced national consultants. Several challenges were associated with gathering data, in particular related to gender-disaggregated data in the form of numbers and proportions. Like other indices used to measure gender inequalities in various domains, SheTrades Outlook uses proxy measures when possible; these are limited to the use of historical data, data obtained from international databases, and data gathered by consultants from national experts. If indirect measures are not found, the indicator is reported as missing data and is calculated as 0. If the missing data for a pillar exceed 20%, the pillar is excluded from the calculation and only subindices are shown for the country.[1]

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[1] A similar approach is followed in the calculation of the SDG index.

Table 8. Data transformation and coding in the SheTrades Outlook calculation

| Type of data	Measurement	Coding
Binary questions	1 = Yes 0 = No	Not required
	Two binary questions	If both answers are No, code as 0
		If one answer is No and one answer is Yes, code as 0.5
		If both answers are Yes, code as 1
Quantitative data		
Female/male ratio	Applied to: • Adult literacy rate • Enrolment rate in technical and vocational programmes • Access to internet • Access to formal financial resources • Estimated annual earned income • Labour force participation • Unemployment rate with advanced education ratio Margin of 10% is considered an acceptable achievement standard	If gender ratio is between 0.9 and 1.1, code as 1 If gender ratio is between 0.66 and 0.89, or ratio is above 1.1, code as 0.66 If gender ratio is between 0.33 and 0.65, code as 0.33 If gender ratio is below 0.33, code as 0
Female share	Applied to women's representation in: • Ministerial positions • National parliaments • Managerial positions Margin of 10% is considered acceptable achievement	If women represent 40% or more, code as 1 If women represent from 30 to 39%, code as 0.75 If women represent from 20 to 29%, code as 0.5 If women represent from 10 to 19%, code as 0.25

	standard	If women represent less than 10%, code as 0
Categorical questions		
Score based on number of dimensions or categories	Applied to: • Type of information offered by help and information desks • Type of child-care support • Number of digital trade-facilitation mechanisms in place • Number of subjects offered in training • Number of digital financial services available • Number of fiscal schemes and financial instruments available	*Example:* a fiscal scheme score is based on a list of 3 categories – tax incentives, tax simplification, subsidies (imports/exports) If 3 or more fiscal schemes are available, code as 1 If between 1 and 2 fiscal schemes are available, code as 0.5 If no fiscal scheme is available, code as 0
Score based on total numbers of answers	Applied to: • Use of definition of women-owned business • Launch of public campaign that includes gender considerations in its message • Participation in regional or international initiatives promoting gender equality and women's empowerment • National institutions' support of awareness campaigns launched by private sector, non-governmental organizations, or international organizations	Consider only the percentage If this represents 90% or more institutions, code as 1 If this represents from 66 to 89% of institutions, code as 0.66 If this represents from 33 to 65% of institutions, code as 0.33 If this represents less than 33% of institutions, code as 0
	Likert scale (based on number of options)	Not required

Weighting and aggregation method

Central to the construction of a composite index is the need to combine indicators in a meaningful way. The weighting system influences the value of the overall index whenever higher or lower weights are assigned in areas where countries excel or lag behind. Different weighting systems are available. In general, they are objective (based on statistical methods) or subjective (based on experts' judgement). The subjective method is the most commonly used, but the objective method is used to validate and test the robustness of the subjective method. The selection of the weighting method depends on the phenomenon under study and the framework proposed for its analysis.

In SheTrades Outlook, indicators within each pillar are organized into variables. Simple (equal) arithmetic averages are used at the three aggregation levels, from subindicators to indicators, from indicators to variables, and from variables to pillars. Equal weighting is one of the most common schemes used in the development of composite indices (Figure 3).

Figure 3. SheTrades Outlook framework – weighting and aggregation method
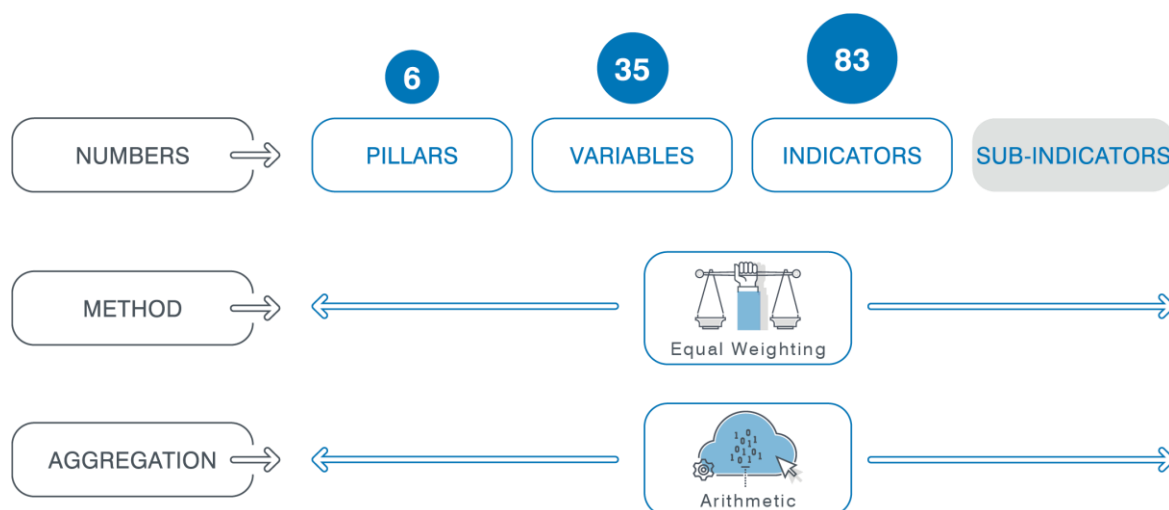
Note: There are 11 subindicators clustered into individual indicators. Each subindicator represents half the value of its respective indicator.

No distinction is made between the pillars, variables, and indicators because none is more important than the other in terms of measuring the extent to which the institutional ecosystem supports women's participation in international trade. For example, greater economic independence cannot be automatically translated into higher levels of social recognition.

The overall composite index, pillars, and variables scores are calculated as follows:

$$S_{ji} = w_1 X_1 + \cdots + w_m X_m$$

Where *w* represents the weights (based on an arithmetic average); *j* denotes each country; *i* denotes the year of analysis; and *X* each indicator, variable and pillar.

For example, the overall composite index *(CI)* is calculated as follows:

$$CI = \frac{1}{6} * P1 + \frac{1}{6} * P2 + \frac{1}{6} * P3 + \frac{1}{6} * P4 + \frac{1}{6} * P5 + \frac{1}{6} * P6$$

The online tool calculates by default the scores based on the equal-weighting approach described above. In addition, it puts in place a user-weighting approach,[2] where users can recalibrate in real time the values of the variables and pillars from 0 to 3, according to their preferences and specific insights. In this way, an individual variable or pillar is deemed to be not important (0), equally important (1), very important (2), or very much relevant (3). This approach will encourage users to engage in the assessment of the most suitable strategies for accelerating the participation of women in international trade. It can also be considered an instructive exercise to explore users' (policymakers, businesses, donors, academicians, general public) own preferences and gender strategies. It is essential to highlight that the results obtained through this approach should be interpreted and used with caution, since they may not be representative of the situation or of society's views; instead, the results should be seen as an indication of the possible pitfalls if one measure is given higher priority compared with others.

Interpretation of score

To render the SheTrades Outlook index easier to read, each country is assessed on a scale of 0 to 1. A score of 1 indicates a suitable ecosystem to advance women's participation in trade and higher levels of gender equality. The overall country score can be divided further into three levels to provide a deeper understanding of the country's performance:

- Low score (0–0.35) – women's participation in international trade is limited, and the ecosystem does not provide the necessary measures to support women and address their needs; country has received low scores in all six pillars.
- Medium score (0.35–0.7) – women's participation in international trade is intermediate; there are areas where progress has been made to advance women's participation in international trade, but there are still gaps to be addressed to improve this situation; country is likely to have a balance score in all six pillars.
- High score (0.7–1) – women's participation in international trade is high, and there is a suitable ecosystem in place to accelerate progress in all areas.

It is important not to misinterpret the score. An above-average rating in one domain can partially offset a below-average score in another area. The overall score of a country is the result of various aggregated indicators, and thus subindices provide a lot of relevant information that helps us understand each of the six pillars.

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[2] This approach is also used in the OECD Better Life index.

Mapping index scores

SheTrades Outlook uses a spider chart to map the results of the six pillars (Figure 4). Using this chart is consistent with the data quality criteria interpretability, coherence, and accessibility identified described. Each side of the hexagon is placed on a scale of 0 to 1. In addition, pillars follow a colour-coding system. The chart helps us benchmark countries with higher levels of gender equality, countries with a total absence of gender equality, countries where one or more pillars outscores the other domains analysed, and countries where progress is balanced in all areas.

Figure 4. SheTrades Outlook mapping index scores

(a) Country with high scores across all pillars	(b) Country lagging behind across all pillars
(c) Country where few pillars outscore others	(d) Country where progress is balanced across all pillars

The grey lines in each chart refer to the average computed at the region level (e.g. Africa, Asia).

The story behind the numbers

Quantitative data are useful for measuring multidimensional, multidirectional phenomena, but they have limitations if we need an in-depth understanding of context-specific economic, political, and social dynamics. The SheTrades Outlook survey collected large amounts of qualitative data. For example, Country X may not have an *official* mechanism to involve women in the consultation process, even though this is a common practice. Combining both quantitative and qualitative data will help to create an extensive profile of the gender-mainstreaming strategies in each country studied.

The range of qualitative findings varies among countries and depends on interviewees' willingness to share information.

SheTrades Outlook includes a good practice repository that aims to provide key actors' lessons learned from effective practices to address gender gaps and inequalities and aiming to increase the participation of women in markets. There is currently no agreed definition of a successful gender-mainstreaming strategy, and it varies between countries; some common patterns could be used, however, to describe an effective approach. This includes commitment and political will, stakeholder involvement at all stages, a clear action plan, building of strategic partnerships, a clear communication and awareness strategy internally and externally, and an effective monitoring and evaluation framework.

This information relies on primary data collected from institutions willing to share their experiences using a template developed by ITC. The template aims to identify the principal elements and challenges faced by stakeholders in designing and implementing best practices.

The qualitative information gathered through the SheTrades Outlook questionnaires will be displayed on the online tool to maximize user experience.

Conclusion

SheTrades Outlook is a first-of-its-kind tool to help stakeholders across the world assess, monitor, and improved how the ecosystem supports women's participation in international trade. Stakeholders will have the evidence to identify gaps between commitments and achievements, prioritize policy reform, and monitor progress over time.

SheTrades Outlook is based on six pillars: trade policy; legal and regulatory frameworks; business environment; access to finance; access to skills; and work and society. Through 35 variables and 83 indicators, SheTrades Outlook captures the linkages between trade and gender. The SheTrades Outlook framework is based on established concepts of women's economic empowerment and goes beyond trade to encompass different enablers such as access to finance and skills.

This paper presents the structure of the index, data coverage, indicators, the data transformation techniques, and the calculation formula of the overall index. The multilevel, multidimensional nature of these linkages meant the aggregation into indices and subindices was a complex exercise. An extensive database of qualitative information on gender mainstreaming policies and programmes, links

to resources, and country good practices complements the quantitative data, enriching the type of evidence available to decision makers and other stakeholders.

The first stage of the SheTrades Outlook data collection comprises 25 countries, including both developing and developed countries. The data-collection process relies primarily on primary sources. To date, more than 460 institutions have been interviewed and 60 good practices identified.

SheTrades Outlook is an online tool that shows the performance of countries at the individual level and allows comparisons among countries and regions. It is our hope that stakeholders will be empowered to craft more gender-responsive policies and to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

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Annex I. Example of gender indices

Index	Indicators
Gender Inequality Index http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii **Organization:** UNDP **Publication:** Global, annually, 2010–present **Overarching concept:** Inequality between female and male achievements leads to crucial loss in term of human development **Value:** Data sourced from various international organizations such as ILO, IPU, MMEIG, UNDESA, and UNESCO **Approach** Inequality index measuring gender inequalities across 3 key areas of human development: reproductive health, empowerment, and labour market Result of a female gender index and a male gender index based on 4 dimension indices: female reproductive health index, female empowerment index, male empowerment index, female labour market index, and male labour market index.	Based on five indicators combined into three dimensions: Dimension 1: health: indicator 1 – maternal mortality ratio; indicator 2 – adolescent birth rate Dimension 2: empowerment: indicator 3 – female and male population with at least secondary education; indicator 4 – female and male shares of parliamentary seats Dimension 3: labour market: indicator 5 – female and male labour force participation rates
Social Institutions and Gender Index https://www.genderindex.org/ **Organization:** OECD **Publication:** Global, 2009, 2012, 2014 **Overarching concept:** Wide range of discriminatory social institutions restrict women's and girls' access to rights, justice, and empowerment opportunities **Value:** Built using qualitative and quantitative data from Gender Institutions and Development Database, national institutions, and international organizations	Based on 27 indicators combined into 16 variables clustered into 4 dimensions 27 variables include 14 categorical variables describing level of discrimination in legal frameworks; 3 attitudinal variables describing level of discrimination in social norms; and 10 variables on prevalence rates describing level of discrimination in practices **Dimension 1: discrimination in family** Variable 1: child marriage: indicator 1 – laws on child marriage; indicator 2 – prevalence of child marriage Variable 2: household responsibilities: indicator 3 – laws on household responsibilities Variable 3: inheritance: indicator 4 – laws on inheritance Variable 4: divorce: indicator 5 – laws on divorce **Dimension 2: restricted physical integrity**

such as ILO, UN Data, and UNICEF **Approach** Provides cross-country measure of discrimination against women in social institutions (formal and informal laws, social norms, practices) across 180 countries Takes into account de jure and de facto discrimination of social institutions through information on laws, attitudes, and practices	Variable 5: violence against women: indicator 6 – laws on violence against women; indicator 7 – attitudes towards domestic violence; indicator 8 – prevalence of domestic violence Variable 6: female genital mutilation (FGM): indicator 9 – attitudes towards FGM; indicator 10 – prevalence of FGM Variable 7: missing women: indicator 11 – missing women Variable8 : reproductive autonomy: indicator 12 – laws on reproductive autonomy; indicator 13 – access to family planning **Dimension 3: restricted access to productive and financial resources** Variable 9: secure access to land: indicator 14 – laws on access to land assets Variable 10: secure access to non-land assets: indicator 15 – laws on access to non-land assets Variable 11: secure access to formal financial services: indicator 16 – laws on access to formal financial services; indicator 17 – access to financial services Variable 12: workplace rights: indicator 18 – laws on workplace rights; indicator 19 – attitudes towards working women; indicator 20 – representation in managerial positions **Dimension 4: restricted civil liberties** Variable 13: citizenship rights: indicator 21 – laws on citizenship rights Variable 14 : freedom of movement: indicator 22 – laws on freedom of movement; indicator 23 – security feeling Variable 15 : political voice: indicator 24 – laws on political voice; indicator 25 – political representation Variable 16: access to justice: indicator 26 – laws on access to justice; indicator 27 – confidence in judicial system and courts
SDG Gender Index https://www.equalmeasures2030.org/products/sdg-gender-index/ **Organization:** Equal Measures 2030 **Publication:** Global, 2019 **Overarching concept:** Launched to support data-driven analysis and hold governments accountable for gender equality in context of SDGs **Value:** Data collected from various sources such as United Nations agencies, multilateral organizations, and research institutes Many indicators are set up by national statistical offices, line ministries, or non-governmental organizations	Based on 14 SDGs comprising 51 indicators **SDG 1:** Poverty: 1a Proportion of the population living below the national poverty line, 1b Proportion of the poorest quintile of the population covered by social assistance, programs, 1c The extent to which laws afford women and men equal and secure access to land use, control and ownership (score), 1d Proportion of women who report having had enough money to buy food that they or their family needed in the past 12 months **SDG 2:** Hunger & Nutrition: 2a Population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (% of population), 2b Prevalence of obesity among women aged 18+ years, 2c Prevalence of anemia amongst non-pregnant women (aged 15-49 years **SDG 3:** Health: 3a Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births), 3b Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years),3c Proportion of women married or in a union of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have had their need for family **SDG 4:** Education: 4a Percentage of female students enrolled in primary education who are over-age, 4b Percentage of young women aged 3-5 years above upper secondary school graduation age who have completed secondary education, 4c Percentage of young women (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training (NEET), 4d Literacy rate among

Approach	adult (aged 15+ years) women.
Aims to measure state of gender equality across 17 SDGs using 51 indicators scoping wide variety of areas Ideal for capturing evolution of gender parity across the world, in comparison with vision of gender equality set forth by 2030 Agenda	**SDG 5:** Gender equality: 5a Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18, 5b Percentage of women who agree that a husband/partner is justified in beating his wife/partner under certain circumstances, 5c The extent to which there are legal grounds for abortion (score), 5d Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments, 5e Proportion of ministerial/senior government positions held by women **SDG 6:** Water & Sanitation: 6a Proportion of population using at least basic drinking water services, 6b Proportion of population using at least basic sanitation services, 6c Proportion of women who report being satisfied with the quality of water in the city or area where they live **SDG 7:** Clean Energy: 7a Proportion of population with access to electricity, 7b Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology, 7c Proportion of women who report being satisfied with the quality of air where they live **SDG 8:** Work & Economic Growth: 8a Wage equality between women and men for similar work (score), 8b Proportion of women recognized as "contributing family workers" (as a % of total employment for female employment), 8c Extent of freedom of association and collective bargaining rights in law (score), 8d Extent to which the country has laws mandating women's workplace equality (score), 8e Proportion of women who hold a bank account at a financial institution **SDG 9:** Industry, Infrastructure & Innovation: 9a Proportion of women who have made or received digital payments in the past year, 9b Proportion of women who report being satisfied with the quality of roads in the city or area where they live, 9c Proportion of women with access to internet service, 9d Proportion of women in science and technology research positions **SDG 10**: Inequality: 10a Palma inequality ratio (the share of income of the richest 10% of the population divided by the share of income of the poorest 40%), 10b Level of personal autonomy, individual rights, and freedom from discrimination (score), 10c Proportion of ratified human rights instruments regarding migration. **SDG 11**: Cities & Communities: 11a Proportion of women who report having had enough money to provide adequate shelter or housing in the past 12 months, 11b Annual mean level of fine particulate matter WHO, 11c Percentage of women aged 15+ who report that they "feel safe walking alone at night" **SDG 13:** Climate: 13a Extent to which the delegation representing the country at the UNFCCC is gender balanced (score), 13b Extent to which a state is committed to disaster risk reduction (Sendai Framework), 13c Level of climate vulnerability (score) **SDG 16:** Peace & Institutions: 16a Proportion of children <5 years of age whose births were registered with a civil authority, 16b Female victims of intentional homicide (per 100,000 population), 16c Percentage of seats held by women on a country's Supreme Court or the highest court, 16d Extent to which a state is viewed as legitimate, open, and representative (score) **SDG 17:** Partnerships: 17a Social expenditure as a % of GDP (for all types of social assistance

	programs), 17b Tax revenue as a % of GDP World Bank, OECD, 17c Extent to which a national budget is broken down by factors such as gender, age, income, or region (score), 17d Openness of gender statistics (score)
Global Gender Gap Index https://www.weforum.org/reports/gender-gap-2020-report-100-years-pay-equality **Organization:** World Economic Forum **Publication:** Global, annual, 2006–present **Overarching concept:** Equal contribution of women and men in the process of deep economic and societal transformation is essential **Value:** Data sourced from international organizations and survey of executives **Approach** Aims to measure scope of gender-based disparities and track progress over time. Relative gaps between women and men are captured through four key areas: health, education, economy, politics	Composed of 14 indicators clustered within 4 subindices Subindex 1: economic participation and opportunity: indicator 1 – labour force participation rate; indicator 2 – wage equality for similar work; indicator 3 – estimated earned income; indicator 4 – legislators, senior officials, and managers; indicator 5 – professional and technical workers Subindex 2: educational attainment: indicator 6 – literacy rate; indicator 7 – enrolment in primary education; indicator 8 – enrolment in secondary education; indicator 9 – enrolment in tertiary education Subindex 3: health and survival: indicator 10 – sex ratio at birth; indicator 11 – healthy life expectancy Subindex 4: political empowerment: indicator 12 – women in parliament; indicator 13 – women in ministerial positions; indicator 14 – years with female head of state
Female Entrepreneurship Index https://thegedi.org/research/womens-entrepreneurship-index/ **Organization:** Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute **Publication:** Global, 2013–present **Overarching concept:** Fostering power of female entrepreneurship can have dramatic effect on country's economy **Value:** Data sourced from internationally recognized datasets (e.g. ILO, UNESCO, World Bank, World Economic Forum) Uses gender-disaggregated individual-level indicators, and institutional-level indicators for which data points highlight issues relevant to development and growth of female entrepreneurship **Approach** Measures development of high potential	Based on 30 indicators clustered into 15 pillars, which are split into 3 subindices; each pillar contains an individual-level and an institutional level indicator **Subindex 1:** entrepreneurial environment Pillar 1: opportunity perception: indicator 1 – opportunity recognition; indicator 2 – equal rights and market size Pillar 2: start-up skills: indicator 3 – perception of skills; indicator 4 – secondary education Pillar 3: willingness and risk: indicator 5 – willingness to start; indicator 6 – business risk Pillar 4: networking: indicator 7 – know an entrepreneur; indicator 8 – access to internet and networks Pillar 5: cultural support: indicator 9 – executive status; indicator 10 – access to child care **Subindex 2:** entrepreneurial ecosystem Pillar 6: opportunity start-ups: indicator 11 – opportunity business; indicator 12 – business freedom and movement Pillar 7: technology sector: indicator 13 – technology sector business; indicator 14 – technology absorption Pillar 8: quality of human resources: indicator 15 – highly educated owners; indicator 16: small and medium-sized enterprise support and training Pillar 9: competition: indicator 17 – innovativeness; indicator 18 – monopolized markets Pillar 10: gender gaps: indicator 19 – entrepreneurship ratio; indicator 20 – labour force parity **Subindex 3:** entrepreneurial aspirations

female entrepreneurship worldwide Aims to capture multidimensional aspects of entrepreneurial development through 3 dimensions: entrepreneurial environment, entrepreneurial ecosystem, and women's entrepreneurial aspirations. Countries scored from 0 to 100	Pillar 11: product innovation: indicator 21 – new product; indicator 22 – technology transfer Pillar 12: process innovation: indicator 23 – new technology; indicator 24 – research and development expenditure Pillar 13: high growth: indicator 25 – business gazelles; indicator 26 – leadership Pillar 14: internationalization: indicator 27 – export focus; indicator 28 – globalization Pillar 15: external financing: indicator 29– first-tier financing; indicator 30 – third-tier financing
Gender Equality Index https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019 **Organization:** EIGE **Publication:** Regional, 2005, 2010, 2012, 2015, 2017 **Overarching concept:** Policy makers need more visibility to areas that necessitate improvement to design more effective gender equality measures **Value:** 83% of data sourced from Eurostat, 13% provided by other sources, 7% collected by EIGE **Approach** Composite indicator measuring complex concept of gender equality in European Union through 6 core domains (work, money, knowledge, time, power, health) and 2 additional domains (violence against women, intersecting inequalities)	Based on 31 indicators clustered into 14 variables, which are split into 6 core domains: **Domain 1: work** Variable 1: participation: indicator 1 – full-time equivalent employment rate; indicator 2 – duration of working life Variable 2: segregation and quality of work: indicator 3 – employed people in education, human health, and social work activities; indicator 4 – ability to take 1–2 hours off work during working hours to take care of personal or family matters; indicator 5 – career prospects index **Domain 2: money** Variable 3: financial resources: indicator 6 – mean monthly earnings; indicator 7 – mean equalized net income Variable 4: economic situation: indicator 8 – not at risk of poverty; indicator 9 – income distribution **Domain 3: knowledge** Variable 5: attainment and participation: indicator 10 – graduates of tertiary education; indicator 11 – people participating in formal or non-formal education Variable 6: segregation: indicator 12 – tertiary students in education, health and welfare, humanities, and arts **Domain 4: time** Variable 7: care activities: indicator 13 – people caring for and educating their children or grandchildren, elderly people, or people with disabilities every day; indicator 14 – people doing cooking or housework, every day Variable 8: social activities: indicator 15 – workers doing sporting, cultural, or leisure activities outside their home at least daily or several times a week; indicator 16 – workers involved in voluntary or charitable activities at least once a month **Domain 5: power** Variable 9: political: indicator 17 – share of ministers; indicator 18 – share of members of parliament; indicator 19 – share of members of regional assemblies Variable 10: economic: indicator 20 – share of members of boards in largest quoted companies, supervisory board, or board of directors; indicator 21 – share of board members of central bank Variable 11: social: indicator 22 – share of board members of research funding organizations; indicator 23 – share of board members of publicly owned broadcasting organizations;

	indicator 24 – share of members of highest decision making body of national Olympic sport organizations **Domain 6: health** Variable 12: status: indicator 25 – good or very good self-perceived health; indicator 26 – life expectancy at birth; indicator 27 – healthy life years at birth Variable 13: behaviour: indicator 28 – people who do not smoke and are not involved in harmful drinking; indicator 29 – people doing physical activities or consuming fruits and vegetables Variable 14: access: indicator 30 – population without unmet needs for medical examination; indicator 31 – population without unmet needs for dental examination
African Gender and Development Index https://www.uneca.org/publications/serie/african-gender-and-development-index **Organization:** United Nations Economic Commission for Africa **Publication:** Regional, 2009, 2011 **Overarching concept:** Women's full and equal involvement in society is critically important for all aspects of human development **Value:** Focused on variables with particular salience for African men and women Data collected nationally and not reliant on international databases **Approach** Combines 2 types of data: 1 component uses data on 44 indicators and combines information into a gender status index; the other component (African Women's Progress Scorecard) qualitatively measures 34 areas on government policy progress and performance regarding women's advancement and empowerment	Built on 44 indicators combined into 11 subcomponents, clustered into 7 components **Block 1: social power capabilities** Component 1: education Subcomponent 1: enrolment, completion, and literacy: indicator 1 – early childhood enrolment; indicator 2 – primary enrolment rate (net); indicator 3 – secondary enrolment rate (net); indicator 4 – tertiary enrolment rate (gross); indicator 5 – proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary education; indicator 6 – literacy rate of people aged 15–24 years Component 2: health Subcomponent 2: child health and HIV: indicator 7 – proportion of children aged under 5 years who are stunted; indicator 8 – proportion of children aged under 5 years who are underweight (minus 2 standard deviations); indicator 9 – mortality rate in children aged under 5 years; indicator 10 – HIV prevalence among people aged 15–24 years; indicator 11 – access to antiretroviral treatment **Block 2: Economic power opportunities** Component 3: income Subcomponent 3 – wages and income: indicator 12 – wages in agriculture; indicator 13 – wages in civil service; indicator 14 – wages in formal sector (public, private); indicator 15 – wages in informal sector; indicator 16 – income earned from informal enterprises; indicator 17 – income earned from small agricultural household enterprises; indicator 18 – share of women under poverty line Component 4: time-use and employment Subcomponent 4: indicator 19 – time spent in market economic activities; indicator 20 – time spent in non-market economic activities or as unpaid family worker in market economic activities; indicator 21 – time spent in domestic, care, and volunteer activities; indicator 22 – share of women in non-agricultural wage employment; indicator 23 – youth unemployment rate Component 5: access to resources Subcomponent 5: means of production and management: indicator 24 – ownership of rural land and farms; indicator 25 – ownership of urban plots and houses; indicator 26 – ownership

	of livestock; indicator 27 – access to credit (commercial, micro); indicator 28 – number of employers; indicator 29 – number of own account workers; indicator 30 – number of high civil servants (class a); indicator 31 – number of members of professional syndicates **Block 3: political power agency** Component 6: public sector: indicator 32 – number of female members of parliament; indicator 33 – number of women cabinet ministers; indicator 34 – number of women holding higher positions in civil service and parastatals; indicator 35 – number of women in security forces; indicator 36 – number of women judges in higher courts; indicator 37 – number of women judges in lower courts; indicator 38 – number of women judges in traditional and religious courts; indicator 39 – number of women in local councils Component 7: civil society: indicator 40 – number of women traditional rulers; indicator 41 – number of women in senior positions in political parties; indicator 42 – number of women in senior positions in trades unions; indicator 43 – number of women in senior positions in employers' associations; indicator 44 – number of women in senior positions in non-governmental organizations

Source: EIGE, European Institute for Gender Equality; ILO, International Labour Organization; IPU, Inter-Parliamentary Union; MMEIG, United Nations Maternal Mortality Estimation Group; OECD, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals; UNDESA, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund.

Annex II. The three domains of women's empowerment

Resources

Resources are defined as a "medium through which agency is exercised to achieve livelihood outcomes" (Kabeer, 1999). Evidence shows that women face structural constraints in the form of rules, norms, and conventions that prevent them from taking advantage in terms of capabilities, access to productive resources (Nigam, 2015; UNCTAD, 2014), and opportunities and public services arising from trade expansion. It is important to note that access alone is not sufficient. Both access and control over resources are necessary to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (Coffey & Riley, 2006). Resources include access to market information, technical and business training, capital, and productive assets. These resources are necessary to equip women to derive benefits from existing market structures and strengthen their position and participation in trade through the different roles they play.

Agency

Agency is "people's ability to make and act on their own life choices even in the face of others' opposition" (Kabeer, 2005). Agency involves shifting existing power relations in society, community, and family that may disempower women. It involves not only decision-making in different aspects but also a fundamental change in women's self-image to help build the necessary confidence and self-esteem (Sen, 1997); in other words, it is not something that can be done to or for anyone else. This is why the role of external actors such as policymakers will not automatically empower women but could contribute to ensuring women's access to resources to compete, advance in markets, and reduce structural inequalities. In this regard, strengthening women's legal status, ensuring their participation in decision-making individually or collectively, and looking at policies through a gender lens are key.

Achievements

"The term 'achievements' refers to the extent to which this potential is realised or fails to be realised; that is, to the outcomes of people's efforts" (Kabeer, 2005). This refers to the outcomes of agency exercised when women have access to and control over resources. Achievements are not fixed or an end point and could be in the form of increasing technical and business capabilities while getting greater self-reliance, a sense of economic independence, or capacity to exercise their voice to claim their rights.

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